

Storybook Heroes

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Storybook Heroes

by [Starry_eyes_writes](#)

Summary

Kaeya Alberich is good-looking, popular, and exactly like a character featured in a made up story told to Klee before bed. Albedo and Sucrose have their own crushes on the man, but instead of fighting over him they turn it into a friendly competition. Hopefully they don't realize their feelings for each other in the process...

Notes

This work was originally a socmed au you can find on my [Twitter](#) but after further thought I realized that I would be able to tell the story I wanted to better with an actual fanfiction. It's been a full year since I've last written, so please be nice and patient with me.

This work contains some of my own headcanons, some featured in this chapter include:

- Albedo and Klee being step-siblings (Rhine and Alice are domestic travel lesbians sorry my canon my rules)
- Jock Kaeya (I was originally going to let him play soccer but let's be honest nobody cares about college soccer)
- Kaeya is the godfather to Diona and takes care of her when Draff is unable to (If Mondstat and Barbatos canonically draw inspiration from Christian/Catholic ideologies then I'm allowed to include godparents in my work)
- Zhongli is Qiqi's guardian for the time being while her father (Baizhu) is in the hospital

Special thanks to my wife for beta reading <3

See the end of the work for more [notes](#)

Meet Cute

"Albedo!! Come on let's hurry, we don't want to miss it!" The young, energetic girl yelled out to her older brother, who was jogging trying to catch up to her excited pace.

"Klee, please slow down there's no need to rush. We're almost there."

It was hard being the guardian of a child that was so energetic, especially when you found it hard to match that level of enthusiasm. Albedo was a college student studying his third year of Biology. The work was tough, but it would never be as difficult as finding the time to take care of Klee and do all of his school work. Most of the time he would have to rely on his roommate or friends to take care of the girl if he found he was falling behind on the assignments. He was lucky to have such understanding friends and even luckier that Klee seemed to love them more than himself.

Today was one of the few days without a seminar to attend, so he was easy to persuade into bringing Klee to the small bookshop that Sucrose worked at. (Even if it meant he had to email his professor and ask for another extension on a paper.)

Stepping into the bookstore with Klee, he was greeted with a familiar smell and an even more familiar face.

"Klee," Sucrose squatted down to welcome the young girl into a hug, "hello, darling! The reading will be happening downstairs. If you take Albedo down for me, I can join you guys quicker, okay?"

"Okay!" Klee grinned, before tugging on Albedo's sleeve to get him to follow her down the rickety old stairs.

The basement of the bookstore was dedicated to children's books, and the decorations reflected that. Everywhere you looked was a burst of vibrant color, something that made Albedo feel out of place.

"Klee, do you want to sit with me and Sucrose or would you rather sit with the other kids in the front?" He asked.

"I would rather be with you and big sis!"

"Are you sure? Maybe you could make new friends-"

"No! I'm okay being friends with you and Sucrose, I don't need anymore."

Albedo was concerned about how Klee never wanted to make friends her own age, but he assumed it was his fault since he always had his friends watching her. She basically grew up with only adult friends. She really only had Qiqi, who she would rarely see, only if he and Zhongli decided to go to the same festival together. Perhaps he should try organizing more playdates for the girls. He takes out his phone to make a reminder to ask Zhongli if he and Qiqi would want to come over for lunch soon.

There are many things Albedo has to keep track of, and he finds it easier to use a reminder app to help remember things. Three other reminders are left: Go shopping for more food (And don't forget the gummy bears for Klee), stop by the pet store to get new aquarium gravel for the fish, remind Sucrose to water her plants on the high shelf.

As Albedo looks up from his phone he sees Sucrose walking over to where he and Klee are seated.

"Sucrose!" The little girl jumps up to hug around the green-haired girl's waist.

"Hope I didn't keep you waiting for too long. I had to grab my stuff. But now we can listen to the reading together." Sucrose says, before picking up Klee and sitting the both of them down on the chair next to Albedo, Klee in her lap.

Just then one of Sucrose's coworkers walks up to the small stage, "Good afternoon, everyone! Welcome to this month's children's book reading. Today, we have a returning guest reader from Mondstat University, our football star, Mr. Kaeya Alberich."

'Oh gods.'

"Thank you, Marjorie. Hi kids!" Mr. Alberich is someone Albedo has heard of in passing. He's not one to go to his school's football games, nor does he go through the trouble of trying to remember the names and faces of the players, but he does know that Mr. Alberich is the most popular on the team. He never thought that the number of people he's heard talking about him during class would be so high, but looking at him now, it's easy to see why.

He's good-looking. *Extremely* good-looking. Is that a weird thing to say? Surely not, Albedo's interest in him is purely aesthetical. He simply just appreciates someone who is well dressed and knows how to carry himself. Although, that would not explain the warm and fuzzy feeling coming from his chest. Perhaps this phenomenon requires further studying...

"Albedo," Klee whispers to the man next to her, startling him out of his thoughts, "that man looks *exactly* like the Calvary Captain."

"What?"

"From the stories you tell me! He looks exactly like him."

One night Albedo had run out of storybooks to read to Klee, so he started making up his own story about a fictional kingdom and its knights. Klee loves these stories and every night she asks him to continue the previous night's tale. Her favorite character happens to be a blue-haired cavalry captain that wears an eye patch. Now that he looks more at Mr. Alberich, he can see the similarities.

"You're right. Now focus on the reading Klee."

The reading goes on and Klee is as attentive as ever on the way Mr. Alberich animatedly reads and acts out the story. He's a great storyteller, using various voices for the different characters and moving his body to mimic what's they're doing. Albedo will admit that he's fun to watch, and judging by the way all of the small children have their full attention on him, he's not the only one to think that. It's hard to keep the attention of kids, Albedo finds it impressive that Mr. Alberich is able to so easily. It's something he'd never expect from someone the university is obsessed with.

The reading ends a while after (As they say time flows faster when having fun) and Klee jumps up excitedly, "Let's go talk to the Calvary Captain!" she says while dragging Albedo by his arm, Sucrose staying behind.

"Klee, no, please, we don't want to bother him, right—?" but Klee keeps pulling and he has no choice but to follow her.

Mr. Alberich is talking to other kids and their parents, sharing a quick laugh with them and giving high fives (That he has to bend down for.)

Klee is practically bouncing up and down as she waits patiently until the small group disperses, and when they do she's quick to pull Albedo towards the tall man.

"Mr. Calvary Captain!" she excitedly calls out, making Mr. Alberich turn his head, "Oh Mr. Calvary Captain you must tell me about your adventures! Where's your horse?"

"Uhm... Pardon?" Mr. Alberich blinks down at her and Albedo flushes.

Nonetheless, Albedo has been described as a genius, and he puts his smarts to use. "Klee, please do me a favor and go grab Sucrose and bring her over."

"Okay!" As the girl runs off Albedo turns and whispers to Mr. Alberich.

"I'm so sorry about this. I've been telling her stories before bed about a Calvary Captain and knights and you just happen to look a lot like how I describe him. So, if I could ask you to just humor her about it I'd be unbelievably grateful."

"Ah, that makes more sense now. I'd hate to be the one to ruin a kid's storybook hero. I'll play along don't worry." Mr. Alberich gives Albedo a cheeky grin while he sighs in relief, the last thing Albedo wants to do is get rid of his little sister's imagination, and the thought of telling her that the Calvary Captain doesn't actually exist is something he dreads. Best to put it off for as long as possible.

Just then Klee comes back with Sucrose's hand in hers, "Mr. Calvary Captain! I'm back!" she gleefully says "Do you think you could tell me about your adventures?"

Mr. Alberich squats down to be eye level with her, "I would love to little miss, but sadly I have to go soon. My horse has been waiting so long for me and I don't want her to become sad because she misses me."

"Oh..." Klee looks absolutely devastated, and Albedo is about to jump in and say something along the lines of 'Klee, don't be rude you must respect people's time' before Mr. Alberich holds up his hand.

"But don't worry, I'll give my email to your Father so you can message me anytime! I know another little girl who would love to be your friend."

"Yay!" She exclaims, jumping a bit. Mr. Alberich stands up and looks towards Albedo.

"Only if that's okay with you, of course, sir." Albedo nods, taking out his phone and passing it to Mr. Alberich, "You know, Sucrose has told me a bit about you, but she never mentioned that you have a kid at such a young age."

Albedo blinks slowly at this. *Why would Sucrose and Mr. Alberich talk about me?* "She's my little sister, I'm just watching over her for now while our mothers are overseas."

"Ah, that explains it." He passes the phone back to Albedo, and he looks down to see the recently added contact with a quick and horribly done selfie attached to it, only half of Mr. Alberich's face is showing, and his eye is widened. It's... charming in a strange way. "Well, I hope you both have a good day," he says before turning towards Sucrose, "It was nice to see you again, Rosie."

"You as well!" She squeaks out, and Mr. Alberich flashes a smile before taking his leave.

"Sucrose! You know the Calvary Captain and you never told me?" Klee sounds so offended, and Albedo has to cover his mouth to not let her hear his small laugh.

Sucrose, however, makes no move to cover hers.

"Ahaha! I'm sorry Klee, I never knew he was someone as important as the Calvary Captain. He's quite the reader, and comes in often to ask for suggestions from me."

That's news to Albedo.

The little girl thinks for a moment. "Hm... I can accept that. Just promise to bring me next time he comes."

"Okay, I will. Now come on, let's go home."

"Can we stop for ice cream on the way?"

"Ask your brother."

The small girl looks up at him with her best pleading eyes, "Please big brother Albedo. I promise I'll brush my teeth tonight."

"I don't know..." He starts to reply but is distracted as Sucrose bends down to level her face right next to Klee.

"Oh come on, please, Mr. Albedo." And with two pleading eyes looking up at him, it's hard to stay on the fence. He's like putty in these girls' hands, the power they hold over him is frankly embarrassing.

"... Fine." He relents, and the joyous cheers from both of them make him smile as well. He reaches down to grab Klee's hand and in turn, she grabs Sucrose's with her other. Then, they're off, Klee and Sucrose talking about their days in the short few hours they've been apart, Albedo listening intently.

The Plan

Chapter Notes

Thanks to me being sick in bed for 3 days, you get this update 2 days early. I know, wow, I'm the best. But as I always say "Anything for Kaeberose nation" anyways thanks again to my beta reader <3

See the end of the chapter for more [notes](#)

Sucrose is in the kitchen making some hot chocolate for her and Klee. Once they got home from their little outing, she offered to watch the girl for Albedo so he could catch up on his school work. He thanked her profusely and then disappeared into his room, where he's been for the last few hours.

She doesn't mind having to watch Klee at all. In fact, she loves the young girl! They're like family at this point, Klee even calls her big sister sometimes. Albedo needs all the help he can get balancing college and watching over a child while their parents are overseas for work and Sucrose will gladly offer the help whenever she can.

On the days when Klee doesn't have school, she stays home with either them or one of their friends. Whenever Albedo is too busy to watch over her and they can't get one of their friends to, Sucrose will take her to the bookstore she works at so Klee can spend the time in the basement reading as many books as she wants. Sucrose's manager doesn't mind, she also quite likes the girl and even went as far as making a little corner for Klee to sit at whenever she had to come along. She's very well behaved so it's no problem for her to stay at the bookstore until Sucrose's shift ends, and Klee has quite a love for reading so she absolutely adores the bookstore.

The water is finally done heating up and Sucrose pours it into 3 cups, mixing in the chocolate and marshmallows. She walks over with Klee's cup and sets it down on the coffee table in the living room where she is sitting at. She's watching a documentary on rabbits in the wild (Klee has the watching habits of an adult, and it's no secret that her brother is to blame.) Her full attention is on the screen, but she at least looks up to Sucrose and utters a small thank you.

Sucrose picks up the remaining two cups from the kitchen counter and makes her way to Albedo's room, opening the door with her elbow and stepping in quietly.

Albedo is hunched over his desk, reading from his textbook. When Sucrose pads over, he turns to greet her and takes the offered cup from her hand.

"It was made with water." She says, and Albedo makes a small face at that knowledge. Ever the pickiest about his sweets. "We're out of milk. I'll get some tomorrow on my way home from work."

"Much appreciated." Albedo murmurs, taking a sip from his hot chocolate, before placing it next to him on the desk.

Sucrose places hers down too, and moves to lean against Albedo's figure on his stool, "Sit up, Mister Albedo, you're going to make your back pain worse."

"I appreciate the concern but I'm fine."

Sucrose places one hand on the small of his back and the other on his chest, putting sudden pressure until he straightens out.

"What the hell is your problem?"

"We cannot afford a chiropractor for you, please just get better posture."

"You're so mean to me."

Sucrose sticks out her tongue at him, but upon remembering he can't see she stops and wraps her arms around his shoulders, his hands coming to hold them as she does.

"Did you see Lumine's texts in the group chat?" she asks.

Albedo and Sucrose are in a group chat with a few close friends. She knows Albedo has it muted due to the antics of Lumine and Childe, but even then he doesn't waste the effort to check it.

"I haven't," he answers.

"She and her brother are hosting a party this Friday. We're invited if you want to go."

"If everyone's invited, then who will watch Klee?"

"Zhongli is having his friend watch Qiqi, and he already said we could drop off Klee before the party so she could have a sleepover with her."

"Then perhaps I'll consider going."

Sucrose groans, resting all of her weight on Albedo's shoulders and letting her feet slide apart until her head is resting on his. He is forced back a bit by her actions but quickly supports himself to keep them both up.

"Come on, Mister Albedo! We never get to do fun things anymore, it feels like I'm a woman in my late thirties, working and taking care of a kid all on my own."

"You are so dramatic."

"Can we please go? We'll have fun I promise, plus, that guy you liked from the reading will probably be there."

Albedo turns to look at Sucrose, "... Why would I care about that?"

"Your silence spoke volumes. It's obvious that you found him hot, I think our dear little Mister Albedo has a crush."

He clears his throat before speaking again, "I admit that Mr. Alberich is quite aesthetically pleasing to me, but I doubt it's a serious crush."

"Mr. Alberich?" Why so formal, just call him Kaeya. You talk like an old man..."

"What? You call me Mister Albedo all the time, what's so weird about the way I address him?"

"Because I only do that to piss you off. *You*, on the other hand, are calling Kaeya that because you have the soul of a 76-year-old man. He's not even that older than us."

"What?!" He groans, "you're honestly so rude for no reason."

Sucrose laughs "You seem to be forgetting I'm a Sagittarius. As Mona says, I'm your worst enemy."

"You're home early."

Kaeya returns home swiftly from the bookstore, which is weird considering he likes to take his time walking around the city, enjoying the sights and the last few days of nice weather before it becomes too cold for him to walk everywhere and he'll need to get a ride from his brother.

If today was a normal day, Kaeya would probably be walking around the city park and petting any dogs he passes. Of course, today is not a normal day.

Kaeya takes off his shoes and sweater while beginning to speak, "Diluc, oh thank gods, you're home, great. I need love advice."

"Pardon?"

"Do you remember the girl from the bookstore I was telling you about?"

"Yeah, Sucrose, right?"

"Mhmm, well today she comes to the reading with her friend she told me about- did I tell you about him?" Kaeya has a habit of either over-explaining or never explaining. There's never a middle ground and currently, Diluc is slightly annoyed that he's taking so long to explain why he's home.

"The Biology student?"

"Precisely. Anyways I was able to talk with him briefly and oh my *gods* he was gorgeous. He's perfect I'm telling you."

"What's his name?" Diluc asks.

"Uhm..."

"You've gotta be kidding me," Diluc rolls his eyes, "You don't even know his name?"

"He's perfect Diluc! He's so beautiful and he may be a bit shy but Sucrose has told me a bit about him and he just sounds amazing, plus! Plus, he has a baby sister that he watches and you know how much I love kids."

"I thought you liked Sucrose?"

"I *do*! That's why I needed the advice. Who do I choose?"

"Why not both?" A familiar voice pipes up, and turning Kaeya sees Diluc's boyfriend of 5 years walking towards their spot in the entryway.

Kaeya stares at Diluc, absolutely unamused, "You didn't tell me Childe would be coming over today."

"I was going to tell you but then you started raving about your two crushes."

Childe wraps his arm around Diluc's shoulders, "I dropped by unexpectedly, I missed my firefly," and he kisses Diluc's cheek.

Kaeya fakes a gag, "Ew. You were just over yesterday, you maniac. Go home."

"Rude."

"You're just jealous," Diluc says while turning to walk further into their apartment, and then sitting on an armchair in their living room.

"Of a ginger?! Yeah right."

"I'm also a ginger?"

"Yeah, that's why I hate you."

Diluc rolls his eyes and reaches for the T.V. remote, turning to a channel he likes. Childe quickly pads over, slipping next to him on the too-small chair.

Kaeya moves to stand in front of them with his hands on his hips, blocking their view of the T.V. "Are you just going to ignore me now, Diluc? I need help."

"Again, why not both?"

"Shut up, Childe!"

Diluc sighs, pausing the T.V. "You barely even know them, it's not that big of a deal. I say get to know them first before trying to choose. I mean, come on, you don't even know the name of the guy."

"Uhh... I think that's something with an A?"

"See. Now, I'm kicking you out. I want to spend some time alone with Ajax without you acting all grossed out around us."

"What?! You can't just kick me out, I'm your brother."

"Go hang out with the twins or something."

Kaeya stomps to the door, mumbling obscenities under his breath the whole way, "Fine! See if I care that you love your boyfriend more than me, your adopted brother. I don't care at all!" and once he's done lacing up his boots and shrugging on a sweater, he's opening the door to leave.

"Make sure you're back in time for dinner, I'm cooking tonight!" Childe calls out after him.

"Okay!" Kaeya yells angrily before slamming the door. His brother's boyfriend may be a pain but *fuck* was his cooking delicious. He'd be a fool to purposefully miss out on it.

You'd think after years of knowing the man Kaeya would like him more... and he does. Kaeya absolutely loves Ajax and seeing his brother so happy with him is something Kaeya cherishes. It's his brother that he hates because whenever Ajax is around Diluc completely ignores him. Kaeya was just trying to get some simple advice from his elder brother, and yet he completely brushes him off and doesn't even give him that great of advice.

"I think Diluc's right," Lumine says, not even looking towards Kaeya, instead, she's laying on the

couch reading a fashion magazine.

"Don't take his side." Kaeya hisses at her, drying a cup before putting it away in a nearby cabinet.

"He does have a point Kaeya," Aether offers, still washing a plate over the sink, "you don't know either of them that well. There's no point in choosing right now, and there's no point in making a big deal over it."

"Ugh, I guess you two are right. I just... I don't even know how to get to know them more. I rarely see Sucrose as is, and I don't even know the name of her friend."

Lumine sits up and looks towards Kaeya and Aether in the kitchen, "Wait, you're talking about Sucrose and Albedo? Like, 'Sucrose with the mint green hair and glasses' and 'Albedo with the cute baby sister' Sucrose and Albedo?"

"Yes! That's his name, oh my gods- Lumine you know them?"

"Psht- I'm like their best friend. Well, only to Sucrose, but I've known both of them for years." She says while walking over to them.

"Great! So you can help get to know them right."

"Uh-huh. Fair warning though, it'll be hard to become close to them. They're both introverts."

"I don't care, I need to get to know them. Not even because I have a bit of a crush, they just both seem like nice and interesting people. I'd be happy just being friends with them."

"Aw, that's so sweet," Aether says, "Okay how are we going to do this? Sucrose and Albedo aren't ones for hanging out on short notice for something that isn't important, especially because one of them would have to stay behind to take care of Klee. Best case scenario, only one of them can hang out."

"We could throw a party? Say it's for you getting accepted to that job recently." Lumine suggests.

"Oh, that could work! But the Klee problem still happens."

"What if we got Zhongli to get one of his friends to watch both Klee and Qiqi? Zhongli told me once he would like Qiqi to hang out with other kids more."

"Perfect! Okay, Kaeya, when are you free?"

Kaeya, who got distracted listening to them talk, stutters a bit at finally being asked to be part of the conversation, "Oh, any day after 4 works. I'm not that busy now that the season's over."

Aether hums, thinking, "Then how about this Friday? Sucrose doesn't have work that day, and Albedo has morning classes. Plus it's far enough away that they can plan accordingly."

"I think that's perfect," Lumine says, "I'll text Zhongli before everyone to make sure someone would be able to watch the kids. If he says yes then I'll send the details to the group chat."

Kaeya is in awe at how fast Aether and Lumine are at these kinds of things, but their outreach is huge and by the time Kaeya gets home he checks his phone to see a new message in the group chat from Aether.

'This Friday at 6 me and Lumine are having a party to celebrate my new job. Be there or be

squared, bitches.'

Chapter End Notes

More headcanons featured in this chapter:

- Sucrose is a little menace, she's just shy about it. (The way she roasted Timeaus in the new event just proves it like girl that was so unprovoked 🐾)
- Sucrose and Albedo are teased by their friends for acting like an old married couple, but why would it ever think that? (This bit is based off of me and a close friend of mine. Both of our parents have asked if we were dating lol)
- Kaeya is legally blind in his right eye in this AU, meaning he's not allowed to drive (Based off of my Abuelo, who had his eyesight in his left eye deteriorate as he got older and he was no longer legally allowed to drive)
- Zhongli has friends!! What friend may be watching the girls you may be wondering? None other than Aunty Cloud Retainer (Who is called Yawen in this AU)

Come hang out with me on [Twitter](#)

The Party

Chapter Summary

Tw for alcohol consumption (Only by background characters)

Chapter Notes

Hii.... Sorry for being gone so long but I am back and writing again haha.. Anyways big thanks to my beta reader once again <3

See the end of the chapter for more [notes](#)

"And you're sure you have everything, Klee? Your toothbrush, hair ties, dodoco?"

"Yes, big brother Albedo! Klee made sure to bring everything."

Albedo hovers in the doorway of Miss Yawen's house, peering at the young girls who have not stopped smiling since arriving. According to Zhongli, little Qiqi has been excited about the sleepover at her aunt's house all week and she was glad that her best friend Klee could join them. Albedo almost felt irresponsible, leaving two young girls in the care of Miss Yawen just so he could go to a party with his friends, but the pure glee on the girls' faces erased the guilt he harbored.

"Okay, have fun girls. Sucrose, Zhongli, and I will be busy tonight having fun with our friends too, but if you need anything don't feel afraid to use Miss Yawen's phone to call one of us," Albedo instructs the girls, before turning to Miss Yawen. "Thank you so much for this, I really appreciate it."

"Of course, one is deeply thankful for the time one gets to spend with little Qiqi, and Little Klee is always welcome in one's abode."

"Uhm..." *what a weird way to speak*, Albedo thinks, "Thanks. I'll be on my way now. Again, thank you so much." He gives a polite bow before leaving, walking to the car parked on the side of the street before getting into the driver's seat and beginning to drive away.

"Are you excited, Bedo?" Sucrose asks from the passenger's seat, attempting to connect her phone to the BlueTooth so she could play her music, "We haven't gone to a party together since, what, high school?"

"The end of senior year party Mona hosted." He answers, gaze locked on the roads in front of him, squinting at the street signs, *West Cermak Road* and *South Central Avenue* "I have no idea where I'm going."

Sucrose laughs at this, "You're so terrible at directions! Honestly, what would you do without me?"

"Get lost, probably." Sucrose laughs harder at this, and the little cheeky grin that finds itself on

Albedo's face every once in a while appears again.

The twins' apartment is not a place Sucrose and Albedo frequent, in fact, Sucrose has only been inside of it once when she was still enrolled at their college and the most Albedo has seen of it is the street he would park on to drop them off whenever they asked for a ride.

Sucrose gives a knock to the door, stepping back to stand beside Albedo and waiting patiently for one of the party-goers to let them in. A silence befalls them, and Sucrose decides to break it, "Want to have a friendly match?"

A friendly match. Something that started for them in middle school. The first of many.

"Let's have a friendly match!" She said.

"What's the prize?"

"Whoever does better on this test has to treat the other to ice cream. Deal?" She holds out her pinkies.

He hooks his own around hers, "Deal."

"What's the prize?"

"A boyfriend if we're lucky. Whoever gets Kaeya's number first wins."

"You little sphinx. Didn't I already say it wasn't a crush?"

She winks, "You did, but after knowing you for so long I can tell that you're lying. If our childhood crushes have anything to say, it's that we have the same exact type, and guess what? I have a crush on Kaeya too."

He pauses, "Ah, so it's really a competition."

"If you want to call it that," she holds out her pinkies, "Deal?"

He hooks his own around hers, "Deal."

It's at this exact time Albedo's other best friend decides to open the door for them, "Oh, hey guys!" Mona greets, "Sorry for the wait, anyways come on in, everyone's already here."

Sometime later Albedo almost spills the drink he's been holding for comfort as he gets pulled onto the couch by Mona, away from his friends currently crowding the kitchen.

"Spill. What was the friendly match this time I wanna know."

"It's actually a competition this time."

"Ooh~ Serious this time, huh? Well, what was it?"

Albedo met Mona in high school, they were lab partners in their honors Chemistry class since Sucrose was taking the AP course. At first, Albedo was shy around her, but after their first lab where they spent the entire class period talking about Albedo's natal chart and miserably failing to the point they had to spend their lunch redoing the lab, they were able to grow closer.

After all, like Mona had said, "*We are completely platonically compatible.*" Which proved to be true as they spent more time together.

That was the first time he ever failed an assignment, and also the first time he made a friend without Sucrose's help.

"It's a bit embarrassing..." He starts to say, before deciding that if there's one other person he could say this to without being humiliated, it was Mona, so he drops his voice to a whisper, "Sucrose and I have a crush on the same person, so she started the match to see who would be able to get his number first."

Mona gasps loudly and Albedo moves his hand to cover her mouth, "Sorry, sorry," she whispers after he moves his hand, "But really? That's so unlike you two. Never in a million years would I have guessed *that*. I mean, seriously, wow, Albedo the-never-had-a-partner-since-the-history-of-never-and-I-had-given-up-hope-for-him Albedo? This is big news."

He flushes with embarrassment, distracting himself by taking a sip of the drink in his hands, "You're making this a bigger deal than it is. Honestly, I could care less about him. It's more of an aesthetic attraction than anything."

Mona hums, "Of course, you would think that."

"Well, what do you think it is then?" Albedo questions.

"Well, I think that because you've never felt attracted to someone before you think that you're just incapable of doing so, so you're ignoring the feelings you do have for him and just passing it off as something normal when it's obviously not, otherwise you wouldn't have locked pinkies with Sucrose."

Leave it to Mona to read him like an open book, completely exposing the secrets he kept even from himself. Albedo has always had a problem with his emotions, it's hard for him to recognize them and even harder for him to act upon them. What he usually ends up doing is ignoring any and all feelings he has, bottling them up because, honestly, who even has the time for things as trivial as that?

"Who is it?" She asks to break their momentary silence.

"Huh?"

"The guy you and Sucrose like. Who is it? Maybe I can help you win."

"Oh..." Albedo adjusts himself on the couch, still clutching onto the half-empty cup, "Don't do anything to humiliate me with this knowledge."

"Would I ever?" She asks with a laugh.

"Maybe without knowing," he takes a deep breath, "It's Kaeya Alberich."

She gasps loudly and Albedo moves to put his hand over her mouth again, but she dodges it and loudly asks, "Really?" as if he didn't just tell her.

"Yes, now keep your voice down," he hisses, his calm demeanor finally slipping, "Can you help me or not?"

"Sadly, I really only know his brother because I third-wheeled a date with him and Childe, but that

doesn't mean I still won't try!" and with that she grabs his hand and tugs him up, moving to the kitchen where Kaeya is talking with Childe and a slightly swaying Diluc.

"Hey, guys!" She greets the group, glancing a bit at Diluc's spaced-out face before leaning in a bit closer to Childe and Kaeya, voice quieter, "Is he okay?"

"He decided to drink tonight for some reason," Childe answers quietly, voice picking up a bit as he looks at Diluc, "Hey, songbird, ready to go home for tonight?"

Diluc steps closer to Childe and leans against him, clutching the drink in his hands as if that'll keep his staggering form steady, "Why would you let me drink." He doesn't ask, simply just states.

"I didn't let you do shit. You're a grown man, you can decide for yourself."

Kaeya snickers, "Idiot."

Diluc glares at him from over Childe's shoulder, "Kill y—"

"Okay, that's our cue. We'll go say our goodbyes to Lumi and Aether and then leave, see you at your apartment Kae," Childe wraps his arm around Diluc and starts walking, "Sorry we couldn't talk more, Mona, Albedo."

"Don't worry about it!" Mona calls out, turning to Kaeya now that it's just the three of them, "Oh, my. How convenient. I did want some time alone to talk to you, Mr. Kaeya."

He waves his hand in dismissal, "Please, just Kaeya, and you've got me curious, whatever would the great astrologist Mona Megistus want to talk to me about."

"That exactly, I've had many people send questions to my blog on if I could figure out your natal chart. I'd like to keep my readers happy, so would you be willing to give me your birth time and place."

Mona runs an astrology blog as a hobby. She never expected it to grow as it did, but soon after she started she had many people asking for her to dissect multiple different people charts. The site traffic picked up, and her blog was able to become very popular among the university students.

"I'd rather not be hexed by giving that information out, but I'll let you guess."

Mona thinks for a moment before speaking, "Scorpio sun, Capricorn moon, Gemini rising."

"Nope! All wrong I'm afraid. Sagittarius sun, Aries moon, Cancer rising. If you're interested, my venus is a Taurus." Albedo could swear he winks at him, but he can't be sure considering he could also be blinking.

"Darn, I got such Scorpio energy from you. Interesting signs, however. Your big 3 are similar to Sucrose's, you'd be super compatible, but your venus is very compatible with Albedo's. He's has a venus in Virgo, by the way," and she actually winks to Kaeya, "Thank you for disclosing this precious information, now I don't have to be bombarded by many people asking for your information, good riddance."

Kaeya laughs, "No problem. Although, speaking of Albedo, you two are close?" He gestures between the two of them, and Mona grabs Albedo's hand to pull him closer into an almost-hug.

"We've known each other since high school!" She exclaims, squeezing him harder, "One of my best friends, we know everything about each other. Of course, he hasn't told me that he knew you

yet."

"We've only met a few days ago, I'm afraid. I was doing the monthly children's reading at the Mondstat bookstore and that's where we met, quite the funny story actually," Kaeya starts, and Albedo takes a long sip from his cup, avoiding Kaeya's eyes that have fallen upon him, "His kid sister came up to me all excited because she thought I was the knight from the stories Albedo tells her. It was so wholesome, you have such a cute sister."

Albedo nods before casting his eyes away to look around the room. He spots Sucrose near the entrance, happily talking with Rosaria, Jean, and Lisa.

Mona speaks up again, "Oh, Klee is such a sweet little kid and she's been so obsessed with fairytales about knights and princesses since she first learned to listen to the storybooks. I bet she was happy for the rest of the day after that, right, Albe?"

Startled at being addressed so suddenly, Albedo sputters into his drink, "Oh, uhm... Yeah, she was really energetic for the walk home. She still keeps asking me when she gets to see you again."

Kaeya smiles, "Oh how sweet."

Albedo isn't too sure where to go with the conversation next and neither does Mona or Kaeya if their silence is anything to go by. Luckily for the trio, Sucrose walks over with a grin and slightly flushed face.

"Man, this is great. I've missed seeing all our friends like this. I'm getting a new drink, wanna join me?" She asks the group.

Mona shakes her head, "I'm good Rosie, I was about to go talk to Lisa. You three have fun though," and with a wave, she's gone.

"Want me to mix you guys some new drinks?" he asks pointing at the now empty drink Albedo clutches, "Not to brag, but living with the Ragnvindr's for so long has made me somewhat of a professional at mixing drinks."

"Well if you're offering." Sucrose responds, and she gently pushes Albedo in the direction of the drink counter so he gets the hint to unstick his feet from where they seem to be stuck.

Kaeya gazes at the various bottles in front of them, his look thoughtful. He then turns to them, a question on his lips, "So what kind of drinks would you two like?"

Albedo breaks his own shy silence, "Non-Alcoholic for me, please. I'm driving."

"No problem. If you like sweet things, I know a perfect drink for you, I used to make it all the time before I was of age," Kaeya gets to work mixing the drink at Albedo's nod of approval. He works meticulously, obviously meaning to impress the pair watching, putting on a show with the flourish of his experienced hands. Albedo is enthralled by the sight, how something seen as so simplistic could be turned into an art, a dance by the skilled man. *It's beautiful*, Albedo thinks, but it comes to an end and Kaeya holds out the product to Albedo, "try it."

Albedo tentatively raises the cup to his lips, and the flavor that bursts on his tongue has to be one of the best things he's experienced, "It's delicious," he says, "you're really good at mixing drinks."

Kaeya beams, although just a bit sheepishly "Years of practice, I suppose."

"Let me try it," Sucrose moves over and grabs the cup from Albedo's hands before taking a sip, "oh

wow, it's really good! Are you able to make the same thing for me?"

"You got it, Princess," and Kaeya begins mixing two, presumably for himself and Sucrose, his cheeky grin proving he's aware of the flush the pet name made appear in Sucrose. Once it's done, he hands it over and the trio moves to the living room, Albedo and Kaeya next to each other on the couch and Sucrose choosing to sit on the floor with her arm propping up her head on the cushions.

They talk for a while, Kaeya asking them questions to keep the conversation moving, *how'd you meet? how long have you known each other? what do you do? any hobbies?* small talk. Sucrose tells him how they met, in their middle school English class where they sat next to each other, and then became closer spending time with each other on their school's Science Olympiad team. Albedo briefly mentions that he paints, which Kaeya brings up more, interested in the man's skills. Sucrose tells him that he can come over to see the canvases that litter their walls. He says he just might.

They move on to talk about school and the two learn that Kaeya is a business major with a minor in psychology. He's in his fourth year of college and has no plans outside of helping his brother and father run their wine business. Albedo discusses how his Biology degree is going and he tells Kaeya his plan for after school: work at a lab that researches the modification of human DNA, grow old until he's 50, and then retire to become a high school Biology teacher. A well-thought-out future for himself.

"What do you study, Sucrose?" Kaeya makes the mistake of asking.

"Oh..." she shifts on the floor, moving her body not out of discomfort but to think over how to answer the seemingly harmless question, "I actually dropped out."

Kaeya's eye widens, "My apologies I didn't mean to—"

"No no no no, it's fine, don't worry. You didn't know," she says, "and I'm not ashamed of it. I had my reasons, so I decided to stop studying Biology."

"I won't pry into it. May I say, however, that I think it's cute you both decided to major in Biology." He said.

"Oh, when we were both freshmen our Biology teacher encouraged us to go into the study. We both loved her and the class dearly and didn't have any other plans, so we ended up majoring in it," Albedo says, before leaning closer to Kaeya and whispering, "but between you and me, I think Sucrose just couldn't stand not being in a class without me."

Sucrose hits his leg and the two men start to laugh, "Oh, shut up! You know it was the other way around, you just love me so much." At this the men just laugh more, only stopping at the soft buzzing coming from Kaeya's phone. He slides his hand into the pocket, pulling out his phone to check the screen, and once he does his face drops.

"I'm so sorry but I need to take this," and he gets up, hurriedly heading to the direction of the bathroom, turning back to call out to Albedo and Sucrose, "I'll be right back."

Chapter End Notes

Some of my own headcanons featured here:

- Mona and Albedo are besties. Obviously Albedo's and Sucrose's friendship is close, but outside of each other Albedo has Mona and Sucrose has Lumine
 - Albedo may not be a gossip, but with Mona it's another story...
 - Sucrose is still a little menace, but thus time Mona is too
 - I'm a big astrology person so I have headcanons for my favorite characters charts, Kaeya's is just what I think fits him most
 - A lot of the highschool/middle school experiences I bring up are from me and my ground of friends since we're currently highschoolers
- (Edit : 2/27 - I also decided to change Albedo's College major from Chemistry to Biology, as I think it fits more with his canon fascination with life)

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Impromptu Sleepover

Chapter Notes

Tw for discussions about alcoholism

See the end of the chapter for more [notes](#)

Kaeya steps into the bathroom, quickly locking the door before picking up his ringing phone and bringing it to his ear, "Diona? What's wrong?"

He hears sniffing from the other line before a weak voice speaks, "He's drunk again."

"What?" He asks, not looking for an answer but just to express his shock.

"He's drunk again," the girl's words were rushed and her faint sobs could be heard when she did pause to take shaky breaths, "and I don't want to be here! He came home later than usual and reeked of alcohol, and then he was stumbling so bad I had to help him to the couch so he could lay down and then he fell asleep and he hasn't woken up."

Kaeya recovers from his panic, switching to a consoling voice, "It's okay, Diona, it's okay. I'll be there soon, I promise. Write a note that you went with me and leave it on the kitchen counter, then plug in his phone so I can call him in the morning. Pack a bag for yourself too."

"Why does he keep drinking?" Her question breaks him.

"It'll all be over soon. I'll leave to pick you up as soon as I can, hang tight kiddo."

"Thanks, Kaeya."

"Anytime." The call ends and he sits on the edge of the bathtub to calm himself for a few minutes, only being broken out of his trance-like state by a knock on the door.

"Kaeya? You in there?" Lumine asks from the other side of the door, "Aether's about to puke so if you could hurry."

Kaeya stands up and unlocks the knob, stepping out as Lumine drags Aether in, "Sorry, hope he feels better. Listen, I gotta leave now but congrats on your new job Aether."

Aether gives a thumbs up from his place near the toilet bowl. Poor boy looks sick to his stomach.

"He'll be fine, the dumbass just decided to challenge Eula to a drinking game— move your head up a bit Aether your hairs gonna get in the way— and lost miserably. Idiot. Was nice hanging out again, see you soon!" Lumine says and Kaeya takes his cue to leave before having to bear witness to Aether's misery. He walks over to the couch, scanning the room for a solution.

Kaeya can't drive himself due to his eye. Diluc and Childe can't either because they both drank tonight, along with most of the people here. Zhongli and Venti have already gone home, Amber still doesn't have her license, Jean and Lisa walked here, Lumine and Aether are currently busy, and he doesn't know anyone else well enough to ask them. Which only leaves...

"Oh, Kaeya you're back! Is everything okay?" Sucrose and Albedo, the only two people still here who haven't drunk, drove here, and Kaeya knows at least enough about to ask such a request from them.

He thinks for a moment about how to respond, "Actually, it's not. My goddaughter was the one who called me and she needs me to pick her up as soon as possible so she can spend the night with me. The problem with that is I can't drive myself because, you know," he waves his hand in front of the right side of his face, "and I can't ask Diluc or Childe because they're drunk, plus even if I could it's not like she could spend the night at our apartment because she absolutely despises alcohol and will definitely be able to tell they drank. I just... I don't know what to do."

Albedo doesn't even hesitate, simply just starts to stand and says, "We can drive you to get her, and then if you want the two of you could spend the night at our apartment."

Kaeya lets out a sigh of relief, "Oh, that'd be wonderful, but there's no need for us to intrude on your apartment. I'm sure we could find a hotel nearby that we could stay at."

Albedo shakes his head while helping Sucrose to her feet, "No, I insist. I'd hate to think of what I would do if Klee was in the same position, I can't just leave with a clear mind knowing I didn't do more to help. Please, I insist."

"It's perfectly fine with me too if you stay with us. You could spend the night in the living room, we have a pullout and we could bring pillows and blankets if you want to sleep on the floor," Sucrose says, "although I don't know if that'd be too good for your back."

Kaeya doesn't know what else to say, so he just utters, "Thank you so much."

"Don't mention it," Albedo says, "I'm going to say our goodbyes to the twins and then we can get going."

Albedo walks away, leaving Sucrose and Kaeya to stand waiting. The two meet eyes, and Sucrose gives a reassuring smile to him. *Everything is going to be okay*, she seems to say.

Yeah, Kaeya thinks, *it will be*.

Kaeya sits in the back of their small car, his legs awkwardly positioned to make up for the lack of room. The *wonderful* perks of being tall.

The ride so far has been quiet, Kaeya hasn't uttered a word since he gave the address to Sucrose. The soft notes of the song playing from the stereo fills the silence, but it's soon paused as Albedo starts to speak.

"Not to pry," he starts, hesitantly, "but is there any more information you're willing to give us? I want to be able to provide what's necessary for her and her situation."

Kaeya's a bit taken aback by the heartfelt question. Seems as if Albedo has really dedicated himself to helping them.

"Considering I'm already troubling you this much, I might as well disclose some more," he responds, "Her name's Diona. I've mentioned her before to you, but she's pretty young. She lives with her father, and he's a good man honest to God. He loves her with all his heart and is a great dad, but he also struggles with addiction. He's a recovering alcoholic, but I guess tonight he had a relapse. I just..." he sighs, "I've already said too much. But, yeah. That's what's going on."

The two don't know what to say, instead, a silence lingers in the air at the confession. Sucrose looks back at Kaeya, expression sad while she opens her mouth to say something, but before she can utter a single word the sharp ringing of a phone cuts her off.

Albedo shifts in his seat, fumbling for his phone in the back pocket of his pants and handing it to Sucrose, whose eyes widen at the name on the screen.

"Hello, Miss Yawen. Is everything okay?.... Oh, I see... Ah! Yes, of course, we'll be over as soon as we can. Sorry for the trouble, thank you so much for your help so far." Sucrose hands the phone back to Albedo, "Klee had a bad nightmare. Miss Yawen did her best to console her, but Klee wouldn't stop crying and kept asking for us to come and bring her home."

Albedo's hands tighten on the steering wheel, "She never has nightmares."

Sucrose hums, "Maybe the stress of being away from us caused it. She's still so young, and it's not like we've had her stay at Miss Yawen's house before. Even with Qiqi there, the unfamiliar environment probably got to her."

"Kaeya, is it okay if we pick up Klee after we get Diona?" Albedo asks.

"I don't know why you feel the need to ask, but obviously yes." He responds.

"Okay, Sucrose how far is Diona's house from Miss Yawen's?"

"Only 10 minutes if you don't miss your turns like the one we just passed..." she pauses, "Right now."

Kaeya laughs at this, and Albedo just groans, "Why wouldn't you tell me if you knew?"

"You needed to switch lanes to turn and there are too many cars to safely do that, just take this next turn and keep going straight. This time try not to run a red light, though."

Albedo makes an unkind gesture toward her.

Kaeya stands outside the door, waiting for the young girl to walk down her walkway into the waiting car, a small bag in the shape of a cat paw slung over her shoulder. She walks briskly and slides easily into the car's door Kaeya held open. Her bag comes to rest in her lap and she quickly buckles her seatbelt.

"Hey, kiddo," Kaeya greets, "These are my friends Albedo and Sucrose. We'll be staying with them tonight if that's okay with you."

"That's fine," she mumbles, eyes fixed on her bag, "just anywhere but here."

"Alright, but they need to go pick up Albedo's baby sister from a friend's house so it'll be a little bit before we get there, just a heads up."

Sucrose turns back to face her, a comforting smile on her face, "Have you eaten yet? We could stop for food on the way."

"No. I didn't bring my wallet, though, I can go grab it if you—"

"No, no, no. My treat. Pick a restaurant and we'll get you something to eat."

Diona takes a deep breath, "Okay," and then very quietly adds, "thanks."

Sucrose's smile doesn't leave her lips as she turns back around, "Of course."

"One is truly sorry that one was not able to keep Klee happy."

"It's fine, don't worry about it. She can be a tiring kid sometimes, thank you so much for watching her for as long as you could." Albedo once again finds himself at Miss Yawen's house, this time being ushered into the foyer while waiting for Klee to come down the stairs at Miss Yawen's call. He gazes around the small entryway, noticing the paintings scattered on the wall and the small table devoted to small knickknacks, porcelain teacups, a vase filled with flowers, and a charm made from red rope and golden coins. All tellings of who Miss Yawen is.

"Klee was delightful through the evening and went down without a fuss. One only wishes one could calm her down, but she refused to talk with one about her nightmare, instead insisting you come to get her."

"She wouldn't tell you? That's peculiar, she loves telling people about her dreams." Klee loves telling stories in general, more often than not the contents of her dreams get confused with reality and you're left wondering if the adventures she tells you excitedly about are hyper-realistic dreams or just one of the many strange happenings that seem to follow her.

Albedo perks up at the sound of soft thumps coming from the stairwell next to them, and he turns to see Klee making her way towards them.

"Hi, big brother Albedo," she says drowsily, her vowels slightly slurred and stretched.

"Hello, Klee," he says, grabbing her hat hanging on the wall next to him and gently placing it on her, "Did you have fun with Qiqi and Miss Yawen?"

Klee shimmies into her coat that Albedo holds outstretched for her, "Yes! It was so fun, me and Qiqi—"

"Qiqi and I."

"Qiqi and I helped Miss Yawen cook dinner, and she taught me how to make these little pouches that she filled with delicious things, even flowers! She said they were *ed-i-ble*," the last word comes out slower, Klee working carefully to pronounce it.

"How fun." Albedo smiles at the girl and crouches down to help slip on her shoes. Once they stand, Miss Yawen holds out Klee's bag for her and the girl takes it happily.

"Thank you so much for watching me, Miss Yawen. I had lots of fun!"

"Of course little one," she says, "come back anytime you desire. Goodnight."

"Goodnight!" Klee and Albedo say in unison, walking out of the house as Miss Yawen closes the door gently behind them. The two walk to the parked car and Albedo helps Klee into her booster seat. The girl eyes Diona (who has fallen asleep since Albedo left the car) but then her gaze falls onto Kaeya as Albedo sits in his own seat to begin driving them all to the apartment.

"Mr. Calvary Captain!" she squeals, "Oh, I knew I'd see you again. Did you come to protect me from the dream monsters?"

Kaeya doesn't even hesitate, simply just nodding and grinning, "Of course, little knight! I wouldn't ever dream of leaving you to fight for yourself."

"Yay! Oh, Klee is so happy this is," she yawns, obviously fighting the drowsiness she feels, "so great."

"Seems like the little knight is tired. Why don't you take a nap while we drive you home?"

"Noooo, no, no, Klee can't fall asleep yet. Klee wants to hang out with the calvary captain more. It's been so long since I've seen you."

"But if you don't fall asleep how can I scare away all of the dream monsters?" Kaeya says, and Klee stops to ponder over his words, yawning once again before she speaks.

"Okay, Klee will go to sleep, but only because you're here to pro... protect... me..." and Klee drifts off into a peaceful sleep from the swaying of the car and Kaeya's comforting words.

Sucrose holds open the doors to the apartment for the two men. Albedo carries the sleeping form of Klee with his arms wrapped firm but gently around her, her cheek squished against his shoulder, and Kaeya walks in with Diona wrapped around his back.

"Sucrose, could you help Kaeya get the living room comfy for Diona and him while I go put Klee down?" Albedo whispers and Sucrose gives a thumbs up while gently closing the front door and removing her shoes.

She walks over to the small closet in the hallway adjacent to the living room, pulling out their extra pillows and blankets to place on the couch, walking back into the living room to see Kaeya lowering Diona onto the sofa and beginning to remove her shoes and jacket, stopping to look up and accept the linen with a 'thanks' and a small smile.

"The sofa can be pulled down to be more like a bed if you want." She informs him.

"That's fine, I don't wanna risk waking her up. She usually has a hard time falling asleep so I'm not going to ruin this. I'll just take the floor, don't worry."

She frowns, "That's not going to be good for your back."

Kaeya chuckles softly, "It's just for one night."

"I won't take the time arguing over this with you," she says, leaning down to set up a nest of blankets and pillows for Kaeya to lay on, "I already deal enough with Albedo's back issues, I don't need two of you."

"You two talking about me?" The blond asks, walking up behind Sucrose to watch as Kaeya places a pillow behind Diona's head.

"I was telling him not to sleep on the floor because he'll get back issues just like you."

Albedo's face slightly scrunches up, "It's not even that bad."

"Oh, like hell it isn't. Didn't your doctor just tell you that—"

Sucrose is cut off by a 'shh' from Kaeya and she glances towards him to see Diona slightly stirring. Albedo and Sucrose stop their bickering and watch as Kaeya gently runs his finger in a soft stroking motion down the bridge of Diona's nose. His touch soothes her and in no time she lays peacefully sleeping once more.

The way Kaeya is able to lull her with such caring and loving motions makes Sucrose's heart feel

warm. Kaeya is so gentle with the girl, years of similar scenarios making him an expert. She almost believes herself to be intruding on such a domestic moment, but quickly gets over it when Kaeya looks back at the two with a proud smile on his face.

"When Diona was first born, I was the only one besides her parents who could make her stop fussing," he says fondly, "I've known her father for a long time, he's one of my dad's best friends. She's technically *his* goddaughter, but I've never cared for technicalities."

"You're a good role model for her," Albedo says, "I can tell how much you care for her."

"Like my own. A lot like you two and Klee, eh? Sometimes it feels like you two are married and Klee is your child."

Albedo flushes, "Everyone says that but I don't see it."

Kaeya makes a thoroughly unconvinced face at this, looking at Sucrose with sympathetic eyes. *This is what you deal with?* he seems to ask. She can only grin.

"You should get to bed. If you need more pillows or another blanket just look in the closet in that hallway," she points to it, "the bathroom is also down there, last door on the left. Oh, and feel free to wake me up if you can't find something. Don't even bother trying to wake up Albedo, he sleeps like the dead."

"How surprising, this pretty little thing being compared to the dead? I don't believe it."

"Oh, it's true. His handsome looks are just for show, behind all that charm is a nerdy introvert who would rather sleep and do homework than hang out with his friends." Sucrose snickers and Albedo elbows her from his spot at her side.

"Well *I* think we should also be getting to bed. Goodnight, Kaeya."

"Goodnight, darlings. May you have sweet dreams." Kaeya's tone is teasing, and his smirk matches. Sucrose decides to do a bit of teasing back.

"Oh, they'll only be sweet if they're filled with you. Goodnight, Kaeya." And the two walk off, leaving Kaeya stunned and with a slight flush dusting his cheeks.

What have I gotten myself into? he thinks, removing his shoes and extra layers, setting them down by Diona's bag before laying down on the nest of blankets Sucrose made for him, drifting off into a peaceful sleep.

Chapter End Notes

Headcanons for this chapter:

- I really like to think of Kaeya and Diona as being close, this originally started because I've always had Kaeya and Diona on my main team and I love them both dearly. Kaeya is very brotherly imo, especially to the younger kids of mond so I think it's dumb when people make content of him with all the other kids except Diona, she deserves love too!!
- Making a comeback, Kaeya can't drive because of him being blind in his eye. Sucks for him but a great comedy tool for me.

- Sucrose is very sisterly, especially to kids having a hard time. I have headcanons about her family which will be explored more in future chapters.
- Albedo is a bad driver. I think he's very book smart, but street smarts he lacks (literally) despite all of the tickets he's gotten, Sucrose still insists that he drives her everywhere
- A scene I wanted to include in this chapter but didn't was a brief conversation between Sucrose and Albedo. When he comes back from putting Klee to sleep in her room, Sucrose asks him where her shoes are and he doesn't reply, instead turning back around and returning a few minutes later with her shoes and saying "Right here." I find I have to include small details in my writing or else it feels wrong, which is why the shoes are mentioned so much.

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Pancakes and Ice Cream

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for [notes](#)

Sucrose wakes up to soft sunlight illuminating her room. She's always woken up early against her will, even when she never had anything planned for the day her internal clock would force her awake at an "unreasonable hour," as Albedo calls it. She guesses that the activities from last night left her more tired than normal, and allowed her to sleep in for once, but she's not one to waste a day away so she quickly gets up and makes herself presentable, leaving the room to freshen up in the bathroom.

After she's finished, she heads down the hallway leading to the living room. She yawns, still feeling the effects of a night spent sleeping well, and as her eyes are closed she collides with someone.

"Oh, morning, Sucrose!" Kaeya says happily, looking down at where Sucrose is still pressed against his chest and smirking, "Like what you feel?"

She immediately flushes and takes a step back, staring into his teasing eyes, "Good morning to you too. Sleep well?"

"Your pillows are very comfy, I barely woke up with a crick in my neck. Diona also seems to be really comfy. She's still sleeping." He says.

"That's good. I was going to start breakfast for everyone. Do you have a preference for anything?" Sucrose says while walking to the kitchen, Kaeya following close behind.

"By yourself? That won't do. Please, let me help. It's the least I can do to repay your kindness."

Sucrose almost says no, but with more mouths to feed today she guesses the assistance could help speed things up. "Okay. How about pancakes?"

"Sounds good. Not to brag but I have perfected the skill of pancake art," he gloats.

"Oh, really? So, enlighten me. What can you make?"

"Cats, bunnies, smiley faces, hearts, sometimes if I try hard enough I can make a star but they mostly come out looking like bumpy circles."

She laughs at the image this makes in her head. Oh, how times change. When Kaeya first started frequenting the bookstore she was honestly a bit scared of him. He was tall and muscular, and his reputation didn't exactly make him out as someone kind. She used to believe he would just talk to her so much as a joke, a setup for a prank that would leave her in tears. But as time went on, he kept coming back for more books and would always ask for her opinion on what he should read next. Kaeya would listen intently as she rambled on about the books, a small smile on his face.

Sucrose isn't oblivious. She soon figured out about Kaeya's true intentions, but she'll let him believe she hasn't. It's a bit fun watching him dance in circles around the two of them.

Albedo and Kaeya are so dumb, she thinks.

She's broken out of her thoughts and looks up to see Kaeya closing the fridge, holding the milk and

the carton of eggs, "Hey, Sucrose, where do you guys keep your flour?"

"You're making them from scratch?" She asks in response.

"Yeah?" he answers hesitantly, "Don't you?"

"That's way too much work. We just use the box mix."

"There's a box mix?" He says, a shocked expression on his face.

Sucrose responds while walking to the pantry, "of course, there is— how do you not know about box mixes?" opening the door, she bends down to look for the box. It was on this shelf last time, so she strains her head down more to find it.

"My dad always just made them from scratch on the rare occasion me and 'Luc wanted pancakes, and the maids at the winery would also make them from scratch when we were there for the season," Sucrose bumps her head against the shelf she was under, a loud thud echoing through the kitchen as she yelps. Kaeya comes over to see what happened, "are you okay?" he asks.

"How rich are you?!" She cries out.

"What?"

Deciding it's not worth the trouble, she stops rubbing her head and grabs the box she was looking for, "Nevermind. Let's just get started."

Together the two of them make a stack of fluffy and cutely designed pancakes, along with some scrambled eggs and breakfast sausage since Sucrose usually isn't one for sweet things so early in the morning. She's impressed by the shapes Kaeya was able to make, and Kaeya was impressed that such delicious pancakes could just come out of a box and he didn't need to waste any time making the mix.

"How efficient." He had marveled as he read the instructions on the box.

Diona had woken up when Sucrose was setting the table and she took the plates from her hand to help out, "Good morning."

"Morning, Diona! Sleep well?" Sucrose asks.

"Yeah," she says, placing the plates down on the table, "thank you for letting me stay the night."

"Anytime, dear. Breakfast is almost ready so sit down and wait." Sucrose finishes placing the silverware and turns to finish helping Kaeya as he prepares the food, but she's stopped in her tracks as two new figures emerge from the hallway.

"Good morning, Sucrose!" Klee exclaims as she practically drags a still sleepy Albedo behind her, clutching his cover around his shoulders while it trails behind him.

"Hi, Klee. Did you wake up Albedo?"

"Yep!" She says, heading to the table, "He wanted to stay in bed and be lazy but I kept jumping on him and pulling his arm until he got up." Albedo already starts dozing off again as he's seated, head resting on his arms.

Sucrose considers walking behind him to startle him awake, maybe clap her hands right next to his ear, or slam the table where he's sleeping, but she shakes her head and decides to walk into the

kitchen to finish helping Kaeya bring the food out. She can mess with him another day.

Kaeya is holding the plate of pancakes in one hand and trying to balance the other one stacked with pieces of toast he must have made while she was gone. She walks over and grabs the plate of toast, along with the plate the eggs and sausage are on. He thanks her as he leaves for the table, and Sucrose follows close behind.

"Breakfast is served," Kaeya says, placing the plates down and taking a seat next to Diona. Sucrose gets settled in her usual seat and the group starts serving themselves breakfast. Albedo, waking up at the smell of pancakes, takes two and drenches them with the syrup. Sucrose stares at him.

Noticing her staring, Albedo looks at her puzzlingly. "What?"

"Do you want some pancakes with your syrup?"

"I hope you find out you have a gluten allergy today."

"So harsh..."

Diona's dad comes to pick her up around noon, long after they had finished eating. He apologizes profusely to her after he and Kaeya had a long talk in the hallway, Sucrose had to drag Albedo away from the door as they talked. He's not nosy, just curious, and doesn't understand social cues very well, which just adds more work for Sucrose.

After they come back in, Draff thanks Sucrose and Albedo before leaving with Diona, they wave goodbye while walking down the hall, and Sucrose feels sad as she watches her leave. She's grown quite fond of the young girl during the short time they spent together, but even her sadness doesn't compare to Klee's.

They became "best friends" during the time they were together, after breakfast the girls went to the living room and colored together while watching a documentary about frogs that they didn't even pay attention to, instead being too busy talking with each other about anything that came to their little minds.

"What's your favorite animal?" Klee asked.

"Cats."

"Just cats?"

"Yeah. They're cute, and my dad and I own one named Whiskers."

"Whiskers? That's such a boring name for a cat. We have pets with better names."

"Oh, yeah? Then what's that animal's name?" Diona asks, pointing to the glass terrarium Sucrose keeps her chameleon in.

"His name is Mr. Furcifer Pardalis!" Klee exclaims proudly, and Sucrose bursts out laughing from her spot in the living room. The chameleon's name is not any better than Diona's cat, but there's no way Klee would be able to know that.

Now that Diona is gone, Klee is absolutely inconsolable. She had tears welling in the rims of her eyes, ready to spill at any moment. Sucrose is only able to soothe her after he says that Xingqiu is

coming over today.

"Ah, I completely forgot he was coming today," Albedo says.

"Did you not put that in your notes?" Sucrose asks.

"Oh god those exist."

"Idiot."

Kaeya comes back into the apartment, "Who's Xingqiu?"

"A high schooler I tutor. He's a phenomenal writer but lacks motivation when it comes to any of his science or math classes so his parents hired me to help him. We've been doing this for almost 2 years now, and his friend group will come here to study too if they need help before a big test."

Kaeya smiles, "you sure are great with kids. It's cute."

"It's..." Albedo sputters "it's not that big of a deal I just find myself having to work with them a lot. Plus, I am short so I get confused for younger than I am, they do the same thing too."

"Oh come on, you know that's not true. The kids look up to you, Albedo. You're like their big brother." Sucrose says, and Albedo goes a bit red in the face while gazing down.

"I suppose." He says, fondly. His phone chimes from its place on the table, so he moves over to grab and read the message. "Xingqiu says he'll be here in 20 minutes."

"Luc hasn't texted me back yet so I don't know when I'll be out of your hair," Kaeya says, "I'll try calling him or Childe but if they don't answer I could always try for Jean or just walk."

Sucrose frowns, "It's too cold to walk. I can drive you."

Klee perks up from her spot on the couch, "Oh! Can Klee come too?"

"No, Klee can't," Albedo says, "Klee needs to do her homework that she ignored all weekend." She groans and flops back down on the couch.

"Well, Klee thinks Albedo should do it for Klee."

"Albedo thinks that Klee should be responsible and do it herself."

Sucrose laughs at the siblings' antics and Kaeya chuckles beside her, "Can you two promise me you won't be fighting the whole time while I'm gone?"

"Yes, Sucrose, " they answer in unison.

"Good. Klee, make sure to do your homework and Albedo..." she stops to think, "I don't have anything for you actually. Say bye to Kaeya, we're leaving now!"

"Bye, Kaeya!" Klee says, running up to give him one last hug.

"Goodbye, little knight. Hey, can you give this to Albedo and Sucrose for me?" He hands her a piece of folded paper, and she gives a thumbs up and makes her way over to the two of them.

Albedo takes the paper and opens it for the both of them to read.

"It's my phone number." He beams, and Albedo realizes something while looking at the paper in his hand.

Sucrose and Kaeya drive down the streets of the city with music playing from the stereo and polite, lighthearted conversation about the books Kaeya has been reading that Sucrose recommended to him.

"The plot twist was insane!"

"I know! I love that book. I'm still wishing for a sequel."

"No, no. A sequel would ruin the content feeling readers get after the ending."

"But it would expand more on the amazing world the author built."

"True, plus I guess in a sequel the author could develop the relationship between the two main characters. I like how it's not necessarily romantic, it's hard to find books like that in the genre."

"I have some more recommendations like that if you're interested."

"Oh, absolutely. Just text me the titles and authors and I'll buy them next time I go to your shop. Although, we could always go now. We're close to it aren't we?" And his devious smile graces his face again.

"We are. I bet Lisa would be happy to see us."

"She would be. So it's decided then."

Sucrose usually doesn't make spontaneous plans, but she thinks a change is good for her.

"Oh my, I didn't expect to see you here together." Lisa is not only Sucrose's manager but the owner of the bookstore. The shop was left to her after the previous owner decided to move to Inazuma to pursue a publishing career, and Lisa has taken good care of it since.

"Do we really make such a weird pair?" Kaeya smirks.

"No, just a surprising one. What brings you two here today?"

Sucrose answers, "I was just driving him home and Kaeya suggested we stop by the store since it was on the way and he wanted some new books."

"Convincing Sucrose to do something without a week's notice?" Lisa asks Kaeya, the man still grinning, "You know, usually the date comes before the morning after." Kaeya's smile drops, replaced by the most embarrassed face she's ever seen him make in all this time she's known him, and she can't help but share it.

Kaeya turns to her, saying "I swear it's not like that, Lisa's just trying to tease us."

The mentioned woman laughs, "It's too easy, you can't blame me. I'll leave you two alone, I trust Sucrose to know where everything is and not make a mess. Keep an eye on this trouble maker,

though." She motions with two fingers towards Kaeya, making an "I'm watching you" gesture. He just chuckles and looks at Sucrose.

"Well, you heard her. Show me where those books are."

The pair spend more time than Sucrose thought they would, sitting on the floor of a hidden aisle in the small shop, books piled around them. Kaeya leans closely into Sucrose, looking at the page she's reading for him so he could get a feel for how the writing is before he decides to buy it. He gives minimal comments on it before encouraging Sucrose to pick up another book to read to him.

Lisa finds them like that, huddled together and a mess around them. Annoyed, she forces them to put away any books that they aren't going to buy and checks out Kaeya quickly before essentially kicking them out so she could close the store.

The two decide to make one last stop before finally leaving, and so they find themselves in the ice cream parlor next to the shop. They sit at a vacant table by the windows, eating the sweet treat they got for themselves while resuming their conversation on books. That turns into talking about Lisa, which turns into talking about something else.

"Sucrose, are you and Albedo dating?" He asks.

She sputters a bit, "Where did this come from?"

"Just wondering," he says, "you two seem so close and act like people who have been dating for years, but when I was talking to Lumine about you two she never mentioned it."

"We're not dating. I did have a crush on him a long time ago, if I'm being honest maybe I still do, but I doubt he feels the same about me."

"Why do you say that?"

"He's interested in someone else."

"Really? Who?"

She pauses, considering. On one hand, she's going behind Albedo's back, on the other she really doubts that he'll ever be able to confess his feelings about Kaeya after he wouldn't even admit to having them.

"You." She answers and it's his turn to sputter, slightly choking on the spoonful of ice cream he put in his mouth.

"You're kidding."

"No. Albedo has a very aesthetic attraction to you, but I convinced him to try to get to know you, especially since you're such a great guy."

"Why are you telling me this?"

"He's bad at understanding his feelings. Maybe if I tell you, you'd be able to understand him easier."

"And what about you?"

"What?"

"What are your feelings about me? Lisa was right, this does feel like a date."

She smiles, "I'm actually great at understanding my own feelings, and you're great at reading between the lines. Figure it out."

Kaeya arrives at his apartment, opening the door with his keys and stepping inside.

"So you're finally back," Diluc says from his spot lying on the couch, looking at his phone with one of their tortoises resting peacefully on his chest.

"Thank you *so* much for reading my texts and answering my calls, Diluc. Did you have *so* much *fun* with your boyfriend while I've been gone?" His voice is laced with sarcasm, still mad that Diluc practically ignored him all morning.

Diluc smirks, still not looking at Kaeya, "We did, as a matter of fact. Did you have fun with your little lovebirds?"

Kaeya stares at Diluc, thinking of his eventful night and morning. A smile finds its way on his face as he reaches down to slide off his shoes.

"I did, as a matter of fact."

Chapter End Notes

Sorry for being gone for so long I have no excuses anyways headcanons for this chapter:

- Sucrose strikes me as a reptile lover
 - Kaeya is, what my beta reader describes, "unintentionally pretentious and sounds like someone out of ohshc with his limited instant food knowledge"
 - Sleepy Albedo is a menace
 - Also I like sibling dynamics!! Kaeya and Diona, Albedo and Klee, Kaeya and Diluc- they're all fun to write and based of of interactions I've had with my siblings
- Come hang out with me on [Twitter](#)

Three, Simple Strokes

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for [notes](#)

Bells from the school's belfry can be heard ringing as Kaeya walks across the field separating the building his lecture was in from the Campus Center. The weather is much nicer today, the sun shining and no wind to chill him as he opens the doors to the library. It's rare to see him here, but he's hoping to find a book Sucrose recommended he read that they didn't carry in the shop.

After a quick conversation with the librarian behind the desk, he's lucky to find out they do have the book, so he sets off to find it. After a bit of looking in a slightly hidden part of the library, he soon has the novel in his possession. After emerging from the rows of books to find somewhere comfy to read, he notices a head of messy, ashy blond hair scrunched over one of the tables in the very back corner of the room, books, and papers scattered on the table around an old laptop.

Kaeya walks over to the figure and smiles at the confirmation of who it is. "Well, look who we have here."

Startled by someone addressing him for maybe the first time in hours, Albedo looks up from a paper he was reading, thin glasses resting on the edge of his nose, "Kaeya."

"Didn't think I'd find you of all people today," it's been a week since he last saw the man, although they have been texting, starting with a group chat Sucrose had made with the two of them in it. Bold as ever. "May I sit with you? You can still work, I'm just here to do some light reading."

"Go ahead. I'm working on a report for one of my classes right now, so apologies for the mess."

"I don't mind, I can only imagine how much work you'd have to do as a Biology major. Science was never my best subject," he admits, "just looking at these papers is enough to give me a headache."

Albedo laughs softly at this, "It's not for everyone, I'll admit. Originally I planned to study art. I bet my middle school self would be furious we became a STEM major."

"What changed your mind?"

"My mother, partially. She was a renowned chemist before she retired, so I've been exposed to many things within the science field since I was extremely young. She actually went into labor with me at a conference. Another reason is a teacher I had in High School, she really lit my passion for the study."

"And now you're here, with a table full of so many papers you can't even see the wood." Kaeya jokes and Albedo's nose crinkles fondly as he goes back to typing on the worn-out keys of his laptop.

"It's always been humorous how easy it is for life to change. I was certain I would become a painter for most of my life, but now that dream was quickly pushed away in pursuit of something I never wanted to dedicate my life to," Albedo says.

"Is that why you said your younger self would be mad with you now?"

"Yes. Believe it or not, I was much more closed-minded when it came to myself back then. I

thought I had it all figured out, hence why I think I would have gotten mad. It proves that I was wrong."

"Change is good. I'm happy you're kinder to yourself today." Kaeya says, and that's enough to distract Albedo from his typing. He sits there, a bit of a dumbfounded look on his face.

"Yeah. I am, too."

Time goes on without them speaking to each other again since their initial greetings, content enough to be in each other's presence without forcing words between them.

Albedo was able to finish his report, but he found himself not willing to end his time with Kaeya, so he's been sketching in his notebook while Kaeya reads. It appears he's so immersed in his story that he hasn't noticed Albedo glancing up every so often, pencil moving along the page to capture the curve of Kaeya's jaw and the softness of his mouth. Or perhaps he has but is choosing not to bring it up.

By the time Kaeya makes it halfway through the small book, Albedo has two pages filled with his likeness of him. He's about to start on a third but is stopped by the sound of Kaeya's book shutting.

"Well, I think that's enough leisure time for us. I'm much more interested in those drawings of yours."

Ah, so he did notice, Albedo thinks as he wordlessly rips out the pages and hands them to Kaeya. "Here, they're yours now."

His eye widens as he stares at the papers, carefully examining them, but his silence lights Albedo's nerves on fire, "these are..."

"I'm sorry, next time I'll ask permission before I—"

"No! No, they're stunning. You made me look so beautiful."

"You are beautiful," the words leave his lips before Albedo can think otherwise, and he watches as Kaeya's face reddens when they finally reach him.

"You're quite talented," Kaeya says softly, gaze still locked on the sketches of himself. An idea pops into his head then. "Hey, I don't have anything else to do today. Can I come over to see your paintings?"

Albedo thinks for a moment. "We should be fine for the day. Mona is taking Klee to the planetarium until dinner time," he says, beginning to stack the papers and pack everything into his bag.

"Are you implying some of your paintings are not suitable for Klee?"

"No. Although some of my paintings feature nude models, Klee has been taught about anatomy from a very young age by her mother, Alice. She has said it's okay for Klee to view the paintings because any nudity I draw isn't sexual." Albedo slings his school bag over his shoulder while he stands, and Kaeya scrambles to follow.

"You've got to be joking. You actually let her look at that stuff?"

"I honestly don't see the problem. Me and Klee's mothers have been teaching her about human

health for a few years now. A couple of painted breasts isn't inappropriate for her view. And anyways—"

Kaeya quickly cuts him off, "I don't want to talk about this anymore, actually."

"Suit yourself. You should go check out that book now. The next bus that goes by my apartment leaves in 15 minutes, so be quick about it."

"You keep them in your closet?"

"Where else would they go?"

"On a wall? You've got to be joking, Albedo."

Albedo's room is best described as an organized mess, which is to say he's too busy to care about making his room look presentable for people that will never see it. Now that Kaeya's in it, however, he does feel a bit embarrassed, wanting to impress Kaeya with everything he does. That's part of the reason they're here in this room now.

Albedo holds up the first painting he grabs from the closet so Kaeya can look at it. It's a simple landscape of a field of flowers his family visited one year for vacation, the vibrant colors of the cecilias and asters made for the perfect inspiration. Once they returned home, Albedo uses one of the pictures Klee managed to take of the field to recreate it with paint. He can still remember how his hand would cramp as his brush made each and every flower, but he was so lost in the painting he didn't care. By the time he finished, he ended up having to wear a wrist brace due to the pain and was forbidden by his mother to paint for a week.

Albedo feels uneasy under Kaeya's gaze, shifting from foot to foot and shake it off as Kaeya examines the painting closely

"Do you show off your work anywhere?" Kaeya asks suddenly.

"No. Why do you ask?"

"You should. Albedo, this painting is so beautiful." Kaeya says it so genuinely that Albedo can't help but feel sheepish.

"This was just landscape practice for me. I much prefer painting models." He leans the painting on the wall behind him and moves to grab the next one, carefully shuffling it out into the light of day for the first time since he finished painting it.

This one is a posing practice he did using Sucrose. She's a willing model for him and more often than not he finds himself asking her to pose for his paintings.

"Is that Sucrose?" Kaeya asks happily, now standing from the stool he was seated on to gaze more closely at the painting Albedo now holds. "Does she always pose for you?"

Now that Albedo thinks about it, she does. She's a willing model for him and more often than not he finds himself asking her to pose for his paintings. "Why not use a model that you live with and can easily ask for poses?" He reasons.

"It's not like you need to paint her likeness, though, you could easily just use her posing and paint another model. How many times have you painted her?"

Albedo doesn't understand why Kaeya cares so much about this, but he can't recall the number of times he has so he keeps taking out his paintings from the closet and placing them scattered around the room so Kaeya can still look at them and he can keep a mental tally of how many times Sucrose is featured in his paintings.

16 times out of the 29 paintings he has.

Excluding all the times he's used her as a model for other art projects. The real number is probably 4 times bigger if he were to include those as well.

"Have you ever used another model?" Kaeya asks.

"I'm not sure, now that I think about it. Other than myself for some self-portraits I've had to so for a class."

"You..." he hesitates, "you paint her with a lot of love."

Albedo wants to ask what Kaeya means by that, how he could paint someone with love by just using a simple brush and paint. He loves Sucrose, she's his best friend, but he always thought that his paintings could never capture emotion. It's just a frozen scene to him.

It's at this moment that the boys can hear the front door to the apartment open before hearing a voice call out, "I'm home!"

"In my room!" Albedo shouts back in reply, and soon Sucrose walks through his door with a smile on her face.

"Good afternoon, Albedo." She says in greeting, now noticing Kaeya's presence in the room too, "oh! Kaeya's here too. Hello, Kaeya."

He smiles back at her, "hello, Sucrose."

"What are you two doing in here? Your room is an even bigger mess than before."

Albedo frowns. "My room is fine the way it is. I'm just showing off my paintings since Kaeya wanted to see them."

"We were actually just talking about you," Kaeya says. "Albedo sure paints you a lot, huh?"

She blinks at him, cheeks going pink, "I mean... I guess. He makes me look pretty, no?"

"You are pretty."

Sucrose's ears turn red at the compliment. "Ah! Well, he makes me look even prettier so I don't mind."

"I'm curious as to why you mind, Kaeya," Albedo says. "Are you jealous of her perhaps?"

"What? Don't be absurd." He answers hurriedly, and Sucrose gets that devious grin on her face again.

"Oh, don't be shy, Kaeya. I'm sure our talented artist would love to paint you too."

"That's not—"

"If it's what you want I wouldn't be opposed." Albedo moves to grab and set up his easel and a

small blank canvas to place on it, much to Kaeya's refusals. Nothing he does will change Albedo's mind though, and in a few short minutes, everything is ready for Albedo to begin.

Kaeya looks awkward sitting on the short stool Albedo had positioned for him to be comfortable as he painted. "So... I just sit here?"

"That's the plan," Albedo clarifies, and an idea comes to his mind at this moment. "Although, if you could, move your body a bit to the left and then bring up your right shoulder, bring down your left, and place your right leg at a 45-degree angle; that would be ideal."

Kaeya stares at him for a few seconds before trying to shuffle himself on the stool, but as hard as he tried he still ended up looking stiff, "like this?"

"No, no, more like... Let me just show you," he stands up and walks over to Kaeya, face neutral but he's certain that his eyes give away his plan to those knowing. As he looks at Sucrose from her new spot laying on his bed, she winks at him and watches his next move intently. Now that Albedo is in front of Kaeya, he places his hands on his shoulders, moving them as he wanted. Kaeya's breath hitches at the contact, but Albedo chooses to ignore it as he straightens Kaeya's back and moves to gently touch his thigh, bringing up his knee. Finally, he steps away, and Kaeya's breath returns to normal. "There. Perfect. Now hold still."

Albedo heads back to his canvas, taking his brush to dip in the black paint. Stroke one.

"How long will this take?" Kaeya asks.

"Not long at all." Stroke two.

"You trying to run away from us so quickly?" Sucrose has come closer to Kaeya now, speaking next to his ear.

Kaeya makes a small humming noise before answering, "I would never."

Stroke three.

"Finished," Albedo says, placing down his brush.

"Already?" The two ask, standing up to look at Albedo's finished product. Sucrose starts laughing, bending over as she desperately tries to suck in enough breath only for it to be lost in her giggles. Kaeya looks amused at first, but then his expression changes to that of fond exasperation.

"Your sketches from early today were so good. What is *this*?" He asks, and Albedo can't help but laugh too.

The painting is just a simple circle with two lines. One for the eyepatch string, and one for the eyepatch.

"Are you kidding? It looks just like you!" Sucrose has stopped laughing, but the wide grin on her face is still there, "Albedo am I allowed to keep this one? I think it would look wonderful in my room."

"No, Kaeya gets this one. I did paint it for him after all."

"Okay, okay. Next one, though?"

Kaeya laughs, moving to hug Albedo, "thank you. I love it." Albedo hovers his hand above

Kaeya's, startled by the sudden contact, but before he can return the gesture Kaeya pulls away.

Sucrose is smiling at the two, moving closer to wrap her arms around their shoulders, "we should go out for dinner! Come on, let's go, let's go. I'm hungry and tired and want to spend time with you guys." With no complaints from then, Sucrose and Albedo quickly head out of the room. Kaeya stays behind for a minute, snapping a quick picture of one of the paintings leaning against the wall before moving to catch up with the others.

"You're home late," Diluc says instead of a greeting as Kaeya opens the door to his room, adjusting himself on the bed to give him some space to sit down next to him. Kaeya hands Diluc the pages Albedo had given him today.

"He drew me."

Diluc brings the papers closer to his face, looking at them closely. "These are good."

"Yeah. And then he painted this." He picks up the small canvas from where he placed it down on the bed, holding it so Diluc can see it.

It's rare that Diluc breakings unto hysterical fits of laughter, but this seems to do it. In an instant he's roaring with laughter, clutching his sides and wheezing as she struggles to breathe. Kaeya side-eyes him, unamused and annoyed.

"It's spot on!" He says in between laughs.

"Shut up."

A few minutes later Diluc calms down enough to talk again, wiping a tear from his eye and looking at the painting again, the smile not leaving his face

"So you're choosing Albedo?"

The question startles Kaeya. "What if I don't want to choose."

"Well, you can't just lead both of them on."

He doesn't think he would be. He quite likes the company of both of them, why is he being expected to have to choose one over the other? Is it leading them on to just never choose, to stay in the company for both for as long as he can? Or perhaps...

"What if I chose both of them?"

Diluc is silent for a moment before he leans his head against Kaeya's shoulder. "They're good for you," he finally says.

Kaeya can't help but agree.

Chapter End Notes

Whoop whoop!! New chapter for you all. Sorry this took a bit longer, unlike with other chapters where I get writers block, I had this whole one planned out and was

motivated to write but I've been so swamped with school I couldn't!! I missed four days of class one week because I was sick with an ear infection, and then spent the following week catching up. I usually only write during my free periods so that's why I couldn't lol. Anyways don't expect a chapter next week either bc I have my aplit exam on Wednesday and I am STRESSING!! Wish me luck on it!

Headcanons for this chapter:

- Albedo doesn't have an extreme passion for the arts, but he does enjoy it a lot as a hobby. Because of this he doesn't see the value in his pieces, and keeps them hidden away, because to him they're just paintings.
- Kaeya, however, knows how to appreciate the arts a lot since Crepus canonically paints. He really wants Albedo's art to get the attention it deserves... Let's see what happens with it hmm?
- Kaeya is a prim and proper rich boy who was raised with a strict manner system, which is why he finds it a bit weird that Albedo lets Klee look at something that would be considered "pornography" in his house.
- Kaeya isn't a jealous person, but he does feel left out easily. Him wanting to be painted by Albedo is just him wanting Albedo to say "You are as important to me as Sucrose is"
- I like ending the chapters with a conversation between Kaeya and Diluc, it comes down to someone who's never been in a serious relationship and now wanting to pursue one versus someone who's been committed to the same person for years. They have good advice for each other.

Salt and Sugar

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for [notes](#)

In the following weeks, Kaeya finds himself at Sucrose and Albedo's apartment more often. Little things like Sucrose texting him "Do you want to come over for dinner?" or Albedo hunting him down after their classes to force him to spend time with them and Klee are the reason for this. One day the two even asked Kaeya to accompany them to a museum as they were having a special exhibition on knights and Klee begged them to invite him. He had a fun day running around with Klee and making up stories of his own adventures as the Calvary Captain, and in the process becoming even closer to them. They've almost come to feel like a family to him.

Today he lays on their living room couch where the three were watching a movie together while Klee sleeps, but Sucrose had to quickly step out due to a phone call and so he and Albedo paused the movie while waiting for her. Kaeya was tempted to pull out the book he brought with him again but he was stopped by Mr. Furcifer Pardalis, Sucrose's chameleon, staring at him from his tank across the room.

They've been having a staring contest since she stepped out now.

"Kaeya, what are you doing?" Sucrose asks when she walks back in.

"Your lizard is giving me a death glare," he answers, still staring back at the chameleon. Who knew such a small animal could be filled with such malice?

She sighs and places her hand on her forehead. Walking over to the tank, she opens it and holds out her hand near the reptile, letting it crawl onto her. She then walks back towards Kaeya and he scrambles to get to the farthest corner of the couch.

"Get that creature away from me!"

"He's nice!" She says, exasperated.

"It wants to kill me!"

"Kaeya, just hold out your hand or I'm making you sit on the floor for the rest of the movie."

The thing with Sucrose is that she's never bluffing, Kaeya's come to learn. If she says something, she means it, and he would rather not have to sit on the uncomfortable floor. So he holds out his hand, mimicking the way Sucrose positions her's, and lets her maneuver the small creature until it now rests peacefully on his arm, staring at him once again but not moving at all.

"See? He's friendly," she says, and Kaeya just nods. "Try stroking his chin, he likes that."

Kaeya brings his other hand up close to the chameleon's chin.

Maybe this isn't so bad, he thinks, but is quickly proved wrong. In the next second, the reptile opens its jaw to close its mouth around Kaeya's extended finger, which makes him flail his arm in shock and sends the chameleon flying.

Sucrose, thankfully, manages to catch the lizard before it hits the floor. Her face is scrunched in worry as she coos to him, "oh my poor Mr. Furcifer Pardalis!"

"See! He tried to kill me!"

"I bet that didn't even hurt!" It didn't, but Kaeya doesn't want to be accused of hurting an innocent animal just because he got scared.

A groan sounds from the nearby armchair before Albedo lifts himself to sit. "Can you two shut up?"

He has that classic look he gets any time he first wakes up, groggy and annoyed, but the curves of his face are still soft and his eyes entirely unfocused. Seems the two caused too much of a commotion and woke up Albedo from the sleep he was able to fall into between Sucrose stepping out and Mr. Furcifer Pardalis attempting murder.

"Awe, did we wake up the poor little boy from his nap?" She says mockingly, fake babying voice laced with malice. It always shocks Kaeya just how mean Sucrose can be. When they first met, she was shy and soft-spoken. She would avoid eye contact and constantly be fidgeting with her hands while in conversation. But now, where she is most comfortable, Sucrose's eyes don't leave Albedo's form, a devious shine to them.

"Eat shit and die," Albedo says, slumping back onto the armchair and curling up. He reminds Kaeya of a cat when he's like this.

Sucrose ruins it though. She walks over and pushes herself behind him so he's forced to reposition himself to not fall off. He looks at her, face painted with irritation, silently asking *what the hell is your problem?*

"Don't fall asleep yet, we haven't even finished the movie and I've been quite enjoying it so far."

"I don't care. I'm soooo tired, Susie, I want to go to bed."

The name intrigues Kaeya. "Susie?"

"Don't listen to him," Sucrose says, poking Albedo on the nose, making him scrunch his face, "it's just a dumb nickname my family uses for me." Her eyes get a far placed look when she mentions her family, face tensing a bit. "I've changed my mind. We can go to bed now." She lifts herself, stretching as she stands.

Kaeya stands too, quickly grabbing his phone, "I'll head out then. Just give me a few minutes to call Diluc."

"Isn't it a bit late for that?" Albedo asks.

"He doesn't mind, he knows I can't drive myself because of my eye. Plus he owes me for all the times I would cover for him when he used to sneak out of the house to go see his boyfriend." Kaeya rolls his eye at the memory.

The two look at each other, sharing their thoughts without even having to say a word. Finally, Albedo speaks again. "Would you like to stay the night?"

Kaeya almost drops his phone, shocked at the question. "Are you sure?"

"Of course! You're our friend, Kaeya," Sucrose quickly reassures.

"Then... yes. I would love to."

He's never been inside Sucrose's room. It's the smallest in the apartment and filled with different plants and knick-knacks, but her bed takes up most of the space, the centerpiece of her overflowing garden. Next to her bed in the corner is the biggest potted plant Kaeya has ever seen, its leaves almost touching the ground, and around it are smaller, but still impressive looking plants. In another corner is a desk with shelves above it. Unlike the one in Albedo's room, hers is clean and orderly and on the shelves are books, statues of small animals, and... bones?

He's been told she got the guest bedroom when she first moved in, but he still doesn't know when or why she moved in. It's not his place to pry after all, but he can't help but be curious.

Kaeya stands near the door, still taking in everything about Sucrose's room (the way no plant is missing a leaf or wilting, the way her books are neatly organized in a big case, the way her closet is the only messy part of it all) but Albedo could care less and instead drags himself to her bed and plops down on the side, curling himself in the blanket he brought from the living room.

Sucrose walks over to him, poking his cheek. "Hey, hey! You're going in the middle," she says.

"Am not. I don't want to overheat and I know how warm you are at night."

Kaeya wants to wonder how he knows that, but realistically he already knows. He's still partially confused on why Sucrose insisted they all sleep in her room

"Fine, I'll go in the middle," she says, tugging her covers from under Albedo and gesturing for Kaeya to lay down next to her after she gets settled in. After he lays down, a bit awkwardly, she places her blanket over him too. Albedo snuggles up closely to Sucrose's back, despite his earlier statement of her being too warm for him. Kaeya just lays there flat on his back, trying not to take up too much room while also trying to calm the steady increase of his heart rate. "Kaeya," Sucrose says suddenly, "what are you doing?"

Kaeya wants to respond, but he's stopped when she wraps his arm around him and pulls him flush to her body.

Oh, he thinks this is why she insisted we sleep in her room.

The devious little witch. Always getting what she wants.

They don't speak after that, Kaeya too busy trying to distract himself from the sensation of Sucrose's skin on his and Albedo probably in a deep slumber with his arm wrapped around Sucrose's waist. So he's a cuddler...

They're gonna be the death of me.

The silence in the room suffocates Kaeya. He becomes self-conscious of even breathing, not wanting to wake the two even if he's close to hyperventilating every time he thinks about how soft Sucrose's skin is, and how peaceful and cute Albedo looks when he sleeps.

Fuck, I really have it bad.

"My family is going to come visit," Sucrose says, voice small and piercing the night.

Albedo hums, shifting his position a bit. "What are you going to do?"

So they weren't asleep at all, and the thought that they witnessed his state of panic embarrasses Kaeya.

Sucrose doesn't respond, but both boys can feel her start to tremble, breathing going uneven. "I don't know. I don't know," she hiccups between her sudden sobs. Kaeya reaches his hand up, gently cupping her face while his thumb wipes the sudden tears that started falling.

"I'm sorry," she repeats, over and over. "I didn't mean to cry."

"Don't apologize," Kaeya says, trying to look at her but the darkness of the room and the position he's in only makes her look like a silhouette.

"I don't want you to have to see me like this. I thought I could distract myself, but anytime I think about them all I feel is shame. I'm sorry."

"Hey, it's okay," Kaeya soothes her, "do you want to talk about it?"

Sucrose bites her lip, breathing heavily. "Yes."

She pauses after that, trying desperately to calm herself down enough so she could speak without having to whimper due to the tears she can't stop. Albedo's hand rubs soothingly on her waist and Kaeya is still caressing her face, but she quickly grips his hand in hers instead, grounding herself to this current moment.

"My dad is a renowned surgeon. He's quite skilled at his craft and has always had high expectations for me and my sisters. We're triplets, actually, but despite that, I always felt like he was the hardest on me. I was the only one that was interested in science, and as a doctor, he latched onto my curiosity." She pauses, moving her hand to wipe the tears that have gathered again. "It was with his support that I started pursuing a future career as a biologist, and after years of constantly doing what he wanted to secure that future, I couldn't handle it anymore. That's why I dropped out of college. I just wanted a sense of freedom again. Years of wasting my time for a career I thought I wanted more than anything, but having to sacrifice everything else in the progress. I had two great friends when I was very young, but it didn't last. They grew tired of me never having enough time to spend on them, they were sick of *Sorry, I can't hang out today, there's a competition* and *Oh, actually, I have to cancel our plans since there's a club meeting today*. I only became friends with Albedo because we were in the same clubs, otherwise, I would have never had the time to see him." Albedo grabs her hand that's not clutching onto Kaeya's and they interlock fingers, the two shifting even closer together.

Sucrose continues, "My family had to move away from this city due to a change in my father's job. I wanted to stay here to finish school. Rhine, Albedo's mom, offered to let me stay with them for as long as it took me to finish school, but even after I dropped out at the end of freshman year they let me stay. I'm thankful for that."

"You're a part of our family, Sucrose," Albedo says so genuinely that Kaeya can't help but smile on her behalf.

"I better be with how much I watch your baby sister! I probably could make rent every month if you guys paid me for it," she laughs, hands unwinding from theirs to wipe at her tears again. She lays unmoving for a few seconds, her breath returning steadily. "I haven't told my family that I dropped out yet. Anytime I think I worked up the nerve to, I freeze. I feel so shameful disappointing them like this, but I just wanted enough free time to live my life like how other people my age do. Going to parties, hanging out with friends," she pauses, grabbing their hands once more, "falling in love."

"Would you go back?" Kaeya asks.

"I don't know. I've been so happy these past few months. But at the same time, I was happy then, too. Just unfulfilled."

"I think your happiness is worth more than anything else. The answer will find you, I'm sure of it."

"Do you think less of me now?" She asks.

"What? How could I ever? You're intelligent, caring, and not to mention beautiful. Everything about you is amazing, Sucrose. Just because you dropped out of college won't make me think any less of you."

Albedo moves to be closer to Sucrose's ear, voice still soft and airy with sleep. "See? If even Kaeya doesn't view you as less, why would your father?"

"It's not the same."

"Sure it is. They both love you a lot."

Sucrose goes stiff at his words before quickly saying "let's just go to sleep now" and Albedo hums his agreement, not moving even an inch away from her while he shifts around to get comfy and places his arm around her waist.

Kaeya wants to move away from them, overwhelmed and heart racing, but Sucrose wraps her arms around his head, pressing him into her body and effectively trapping him.

"Kaeya," she whispers into his ear, "thank you." She presses a kiss to his forehead, moving her hand down to rub his back softly.

He wants to respond. Wants to tell her just how much he cares for her, how much he wants her to trust him, reassure her that nothing about her past could make him like her any less, and he wants to say the same to Albedo. He wants to spend every night wrapped in their embraces, overheating and sweaty but he doesn't care, because who could when the most perfect beings are embracing him? He wants to be with them every single moment of the day, even if he has to suffer death glares from a lizard that hates him. Even if he has to deal with Albedo's countless number of post-its around the house reminding him of such simple things. Even if he has to be the victim of Sucrose's cruelty. He wants everything with them because, god, he loves them. *He loves the both of them.*

In the end, the combination of Sucrose's warmth, her hand gently caressing his back, and the steady rhythm of Albedo's snores leads him to a deep, peaceful sleep...

Chapter End Notes

Surprise!! I actually was able to finish this chapter on time which I did not expect lmao. The aplit test fucking sucked but at least it's over. Anyways this chapter is a bit short, but I felt there wasn't really anything else to add. 1/3 of them have admitted their feelings now so I wonder who will next... Hehe

Headcanons for this chapter:

- Both Albedo's and Sucrose's love languages are quality time, so they try to invite Kaeya to hang out with them a lot

- Sucrose's chameleon is just like her, looks innocent but is just a little menace. Don't worry about the chameleon tho, even if it hit the floor it wouldn't be seriously hurt as most lizards are made for falls like that lmao (Speaking from experience..... I am so sorry Leo my leopard gecko forgive me)
- I have my own headcanons for Sucrose's family and I can't wait to share them with you!! But for now you just get to know that she only has her dad, and she's a triplet.
- Albedo is only touchy when he's really sleepy. I like sleepy Albedo :)

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A Knightly Story

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for [notes](#)

... Only for him to be woken up a few minutes later with the whine of a door's hinges opening, and the creaking of floorboards as a small figure tiptoes over to the bed.

"Sucrose?" Klee whispers, panic evident in her tone. "Sucrose, I can't find Albedo. He's not in his room and I'm scared."

Albedo lets out a slight groan and quickly sits up, taking the small girl into his arms. "I'm right here, Klee, don't worry," he says, picking her up and rolling over so she's squished between him and Sucrose.

The girl giggles, moving to untrap her braided hair from behind her. "What are you doing in Sucrose's room?" She asks.

"I got scared too."

"You get scared?!" She exclaims.

Albedo hums in reassurance. "Of course I do."

"But you're a grownup!"

"Everyone gets scared Klee, even grownups."

"Even Sucrose?"

"Even me," Sucrose replies, rolling onto her back to wrap one arm around Klee.

"I bet Mr. Cavalry Captain doesn't get scared," Klee says, "he needs to be brave to protect the city from evil monsters!" Kaeya can't help but laugh suddenly, startling Klee. "Mr. Cavalry Captain! What are you doing here? Why are you in Sucrose's bed?"

"Because I got scared too! It's just like your big brother said, everyone gets scared. Even knights, but it's with the support of others they're able to be brave and keep going."

"That makes sense. Albedo and Sucrose make you feel brave, so that's why you're with them all the time?"

"Klee does too."

She giggles, and rolls over Albedo to stand up again. "Albedo, can you tell me another story in my room so I can go back to bed?"

"Do I have to?"

"Yes! You need to finish the story."

"But the real Cavalry Captain is right there, so why don't you ask him to tell you his stories?"

Klee gasps happily, as if just now realizing that, yes, yes! She could just ask the *real* Cavalry

Captain to give her recounts of his totally real not fake definitely happened stories.

Kaeya hates Albedo for sticking him with this job just so he can go back to sleep again. Kaeya's never done any form of creative writing since he was in his sophomore English class, but maybe since he reads a lot he'd be able to produce a believable story? But he doesn't even know *what* happens in the stories Albedo tells Klee. During his silent panic, one thought remains.

I hate Albedo when he's tired.

Klee comes around to the side of the bed where he is and tugs his arm, urging him to come with her. He stands, suppressing a yawn as she basically drags him down the hall to where her room is.

Klee's room is nothing like one would expect a little girl's room to look. There are science and travel posters hung on the walls, no doubt from Klee's mothers. One poster shows the details of why exactly a volcano explodes and considering Klee's fiery personality, Kaeya thinks it fits her perfectly. In the corner of her room is a desk scattered with different drawing materials and papers filled with the young girl's doodles. On the opposite side is a table with a fish tank on top, obviously well-loved and taken care of if the perfectly clean state of the tank is any indicator. The fish swim around happily, no thoughts or worries plaguing them.

Klee runs over to her bed, bouncing on top of it while getting the covers over her small body. Once she's settled, she stares expectantly at Kaeya, and he sighs while sitting in the chair placed next to her bed.

"So," he starts, "what adventure did Albedo tell you about last time?"

"The one about the wind dragon flying above your city! But I fell asleep before the rest of it, so I don't know *why* he was over the city. Wouldn't he be more comfortable in his castle?"

Kaeya scratches his cheek, thinking carefully over how to continue the story without making it obvious that no, he is not actually the Cavalry Captain from her stories. "Well, he would be, but he was actually attacking the city!"

Klee gasps. "But Albedo said he was a nice dragon!"

Oh fuck. I'm already ruining it, Kaeya thinks.

"He is! He's a nice dragon, but at that time he was being..." this is a lot harder than he thought it would be, "... controlled?"

"Controlled?"

"Yes, controlled!"

"By the Abyss Order? That mean and evil organization Albedo said wanted to destroy the city?"

"The very one!" Kaeya snaps, finally being given some rope.

Okay, so a dragon being controlled by an Abyss Order (?) Is now attacking the city where I'm supposed to live? What next, what next? Think, Kaeya!

"How did the Abyss Order control the dragon?" Klee asks in the middle of Kaeya's panic.

"Uhm... Poison? Yeah, poison. They put this poisonous..." he looks around her room, eyes searching for something, "... crystal. Yeah, yeah, a poisonous crystal on his back and that's how

they controlled him."

"And then they made him attack the city!?"

"Yes! Tragic, isn't it? Anyways, with my help we're able to—" Kaeya's breath hitches, thinking 'killing' would be too extreme, "—subdue. It. Uhm, and then it retreated to this... Old castle it lives in. So I had to go and take my men to fight it again, but when we got there it—"

Klee interrupts him, excitedly asking, "Did you subdue it using your ice powers?"

Ice powers?!

"Of course I did! But don't worry! I didn't hurt him I just wanted to knock the poisonous crystal off his back."

"But it didn't work so that's why you had to go to his castle."

"Precisely. When my men and I got to the castle we found that the road was protected by a lot of monsters. After defeating them we're finally able to reach the gates, but there's a problem!" Kaeya finds himself lost in the story, the events coming to him more easily now. "The castle is protected by a magic barrier, and I'm the only one able to get through thanks to my magic, so I need to leave my men behind. I was all by myself now, but despite that, knowing that I needed to protect my city and men, I climbed the tower to challenge the dragon."

Klee looks at him, absolutely enthralled in the story, so he keeps going. "The dragon flies above me, and with my powers, I'm able to make him land on the stone platform of the tower to—"

"You don't tell the stories like Albedo does."

Kaeya flushes in embarrassment, "Look I'm trying kid, but it's hard to tell stories, okay?"

"But you're not even giving me any details! What were you feeling, how was the dragon fighting you, where was the abyss order?!"

Kaeya stops her before she works herself into a frenzy. "Do you want me to start over from when I entered the castle then?"

"Yes, please."

"Okay. So there I was, alone in the castle without the support of my men. I almost turn back, scared, because even though I'm a brave knight, I can get scared too. But then I think about all the people that I need to save so they can go back to being safe and happy, and that motivates me to start the gruesome task of climbing to the tall towers of the castle." Kaeya continues, seeing Klee much happier while listening to the story. "The stone stairs were crumbling beneath my feet, but after carefully working my way around the obstacles, I finally reach the top of the castle. It's in an even worse state than the rest of it, big gaps in the stone leaving me chilled with the violent winds the flapping of the dragon's wings make. I draw my sword, coming face to face with the dragon, and he flies away again, doing a loop in the air to shoot a beam of pure magical energy at me!"

"Oh no!" Klee gasps.

"Oh no indeed. But I'm able to dodge it, rolling on the tower to go onto the platforms near it. They're easier to fight on, and with the advantage, I'm able to hit the dragon anytime he flies close to me to attack. It's a tiring battle, but I finally get him to land, stunned and immobilized."

"What does immobilized mean?" Klee pronounced the word slowly and carefully, but it still comes out sounding like *imm-bowl-zed*.

"It means being unable to move. Anyways, back to the story. While the dragon is down, I climb his back to where the crystal is. I hit my sword against it, again and again, until it finally shatters into millions of tiny fragments, and the dragon is freed from the control of the abyss order!"

"Yay!" She exclaims, yawning after the little burst of energy. Oh thank goodness, she's almost asleep.

"The dragon then gives me a ride back to my men and promises to not attack the city again. The abyss order, scared of the dragon now, runs away. We return to the city with the good news, and a big celebration breaks out! It was a wonderful party, all for me and my heroics. But let me tell you a secret Klee," Kaeya says, voice dropping to a whisper as he leans towards her.

"What is it?" She whispers back.

"If it wasn't for people like you, people I love and care about and want to keep safe, I would have never had the courage to defeat that dragon. So really, the big party was for all of us."

She smiles drowsily, "Like Sucrose and Albedo? You love them a lot, right?"

Kaeya is stunned for a bit, but replies, "Of course I do," happily.

"They love you a lot, too. I could tell. When we first met you at the reading, Albedo went really red when he saw you. That's how I knew he liked-liked you, so I dragged him over to come to talk to you."

...

What?

"Klee—"

"Kaeya, can I tell you a secret too?" She whispers.

"What is it?" He whispers back.

"I know you're not the real Cavalry Captain," and she slips into sleep, eyes closing and breath evening. Kaeya sits for a bit longer, staring at the young girl before coming to his senses and rising to properly tuck her in and go back to Sucrose's room.

Chapter End Notes

More of a 7.5 than chapter 8 but I wanted to give you all this short and sweet chapter. The plot twist is revealed, Klee is the mastermind behind Kaebrose!! She's way too old and smart to believe in a silly thing like that anyways, she knew from the start but played dumb to give excuses for Kaeya to hang out with them more. And it worked!!! She was sick and tired of seeing her brother all alone and actually got him a bf, what a kid lmao.

No headcanons for this chapter really, but the story Kaeya's detailing is just

stormterror but he's the main character if you couldn't tell.

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Opportunities

Chapter Notes

HEY I'M BACK I'M SO SORRY FOR DISAPPEARING FOR LIKE 3 MONTHS
LMAO I WAS ENJOYING MY SUMMER BREAK anyways I'm back to the weekly upload schedule, but we're kinda towards the end of the story now or at least halfway. Again, I don't really have anything planned out I just write what I'm in the mood for. I rilly don't think this fic will be longer than 15 chapters though. Anyways!! Enjoy!! And again thanks to my beta reader who deals with my month disappearances

See the end of the chapter for more [notes](#)

Days pass leisurely for the three. Most of their time is spent together, sometimes actively talking with one another, feeling that if they even go a second without hearing the others' voices they would die; and sometimes just sitting around in each other's company, Sucrose reading while Kaeya does homework and Albedo sketches. Kaeya finds it hard to not constantly be in their presence after he realizes that his feelings aren't exactly platonic, but at the same time it makes his heart ache to constantly subject himself to the increased heart rate that comes from these domestic hangouts.

Fortunately for his poor heart, today he is not at the apartment he seems to spend most of his time at, and is instead out for brunch with his family. A long-overdue occasion and Diluc makes to remind him of that fact constantly.

"I'm telling you, Father," he says in between the bites of his pancakes, "every day, all day, it's just *'today Sucrose did the cuuuutest thing'* or *'Albedo is so smart and handsome'* and he's absolutely obsessed with them and it's annoying."

Their father laughs, "Sounds like how you were when you first got together with Ajax."

"That's what I tell him!" Kaeya exclaims, picking the olives from the salad he ordered and placing them on a napkin.

"Oh, shush. That was different, I was a dumb teenager experiencing his first dumb crush. Kaeya, however, is a grown man and these aren't even his first crushes or first partners."

Kaeya flushes, waving his hand at Diluc, "Hey didn't I tell you not to—" He glances at Crepus, who is staring back at him, "... in front of him?" He finishes weakly.

"Oh, please, I understand." Crepus sits up straighter, resting his hands neatly on the table. "You know, I was part of a polycule myself, back in the day."

"Huh?" The boys stare at him in disbelief, and he just laughs.

"Yeah, I guess I've never mentioned it before. Life could've been different for us, but it didn't work out, and soon after we went our separate ways I met your mother, Diluc, I'm sure you know the rest of the story. Enough about this old man though! Kaeya, tell me more about these two, what are their names again?"

“Albedo and Sucrose. Albedo is a biology major at my school, extremely smart and fun to talk to, plus he has an adorable baby sister who loves me so that’s a good bonus. Sucrose lives with them and she’s an employee at the bookstore I volunteer to read at sometimes. She has this chameleon that hates my guts and her room is filled with bones from god knows where, she seems so sweet but is so fucked up it’s funny. Sucrose loves to read and Albedo is an amazing artist, speaking of which, I wanted to talk to you about that.”

“Oh?”

“He has around 2 dozen paintings just hidden in his closet and nobody has seen them except Sucrose and me. I know you have that friend who works at the art gallery, and I was wondering if—”

Crepus cuts him off in understanding. “Oh, I get it. You want to give him a place to showcase his art.”

Kaeya doesn’t meet his eyes, scratching at his face instead. “Yeah. He’s extremely talented, and I want to encourage him to show off his work.”

"Well," Crepus starts, sitting back in his chair, "you're in luck. My buddy is having an exhibition in a month or so to promote the artists that work closely with the gallery. I'm sure I could convince him to include an up-and-coming artist in the lineup. Send me pictures of his work and I'll arrange a lunch with him."

"I'll tag along too!" Kaeya offers. "Albedo and I could come to meet him personally with you."

"Good idea."

Diluc stares at them, "Now that you're done, can we backtrack to when Father said he used to be part of a polycule? When was that? With who?!"

Their father lets out a deep laugh from his gut, unable to control it.

"And after avoiding the question for a solid 30 minutes, he finally lets up and that's how we found out that our father and the man who taught us fencing used to date each other! Not only him, but the bartender who still works at our tavern! Honestly, my life has changed drastically." Kaeya finishes his recount while scrubbing away at the dishes from the dinner he just had with Sucrose and Albedo. After all, it's the least he can do after they made such a delicious meal and invited him over to share it. Sucrose listened to him intently as he rambled on, taking the silverware he would pass her to dry as she gasped at the reveal.

"You just found out? How long ago was this?" She asks.

"A few years before Diluc was born, so 4 years before they adopted me."

Albedo, who has quietly been scrolling on his phone from his place at the table, looks up suddenly. "You're adopted?!" He exclaims.

Sucrose breaks into a manic fit of laughter, almost dropping the cup she was drying while Kaeya just stares at Albedo, mouth agape. "Albedo," he starts voice disappointment, "I'm literally brown."

"I thought your guys' mother..." he trails off as Sucrose continues laughing at him.

"Oh my god," she manages to say between her laughs, "Oh my god, how long have you thought

that?"

"Since I met him!" Albedo buries his face in his hands, obviously embarrassed. "I thought you were mixed. It's not like I've met your parents."

Kaeya holds in his laughter, seeing the opening here. "We can change that. There's something I want to talk to you about."

Albedo straightens up, looking at Kaeya, "... what do you mean?"

"Have you ever considered showcasing your art?"

"Where's this coming from?"

"My father is friends with a gallery owner, and we've arranged a meeting with him just so you could discuss if you'd want to be in a show he's putting on and if he'd make it happen. I think you should—"

"No." He responds quickly.

Even Sucrose looks surprised at this. "What? You're so talented though, why don't you want others to see your paintings?"

"Exactly that. I don't want others to see my paintings."

"But you show them to me all the time."

"That's different. *You're* different."

"And the art we have around the apartment?"

"Also different. The art I make for fun and the art I make for decor is completely different."

She frowns, staring at Albedo who now is avoiding making eye contact. After a few minutes, she goes back to drying the dishes and an awkward silence falls over the group.

Eventually, Albedo breaks it. "When would the meeting be?"

"This Sunday at noon. You would just need to print pictures of your big pieces and any small ones that are easy to transport. It's a really good opportunity, Albedo."

"I know, I know, it's just..." he sighs, "am I even good enough for these kinds of things?"

"Are you kidding me?!" Sucrose exclaims, fed up.

"I'm serious! If I was good enough then I could have gotten myself into an exhibition, but I couldn't. Instead, I have to rely on my rich friend's dad to get me into one. It's demeaning, I feel like a trust fund baby being handed everything on a gold platter."

Kaeya laughs, "how do you think all those other artists got into the show? Things like this are exclusive and difficult for no reason, I just want to help you get out there, and this will be the last time I do if you want to make it on your own."

The blond taps the table languidly, before once again sighing. "What should I wear for the meeting? Is it like, business casual or fancy?"

"Itchy," Albedo complains while tugging at the collar of the suit Kaeya borrowed for him. To think Albedo would fit into the suit he wore to his aunt's wedding when he was 16.

"It's only for a little while. Ugh, get over here, you messed up your tie."

Albedo shuffles over, standing still while Kaeya undoes and redos the tie with practiced ease. His fingers gently skim over Albedo's chest through the shirt, making him go stiff. After a painstaking 15 seconds, Kaeya finishes his work and places his hands on Albedo's shoulders.

"There," he says, "absolutely perfect."

Albedo feels his face heat up and quickly turns away from Kaeya, uttering a small thank you while opening the door for him.

"Let's get this over with."

A week later Albedo is slouched on top of the coffee table in his living room, Klee napping on the couch behind him while he tugs at his hair.

After the success of the meeting last week, he was informed by the gallery owner (a polite man by the name of Vermeer) that he would need a total of 15 paintings to showcase in the exhibition. He went home straight after the meeting and with the help of Sucrose and Kaeya, Albedo was able to narrow down that only 13 of his 29 paintings were up to par with the gallery's and Albedo's requirements, and he would need to finish two more paintings for the gallery by the end of the month.

What he originally thought to be an easy task, turned out to be quite difficult, as he lost his motivation to paint the last two he needed.

"You're going to get nowhere like that," Sucrose says, walking next to him and handing him the cup of hot chocolate she made. "We're out of milk again, by the way."

Albedo grimaces. "Water?"

"Yeah," and she laughs at the face he makes, sitting next to him and resting her head on his shoulder. "Let me guess, you don't know what to paint."

"I don't know what to paint, I don't know when I'm going to paint, I don't even know *how* to paint."

"Oh, stop that. You're a phenomenal mind who finds beauty in everything. I'm sure you'll figure it out soon. Although..."

"What?"

"It's no wonder you have no inspiration. You haven't left the apartment for anything other than your classes in over a week. This can't take up all of your time."

"But time is going to run out and I—"

"No buts!" She exclaims, sitting up straight to stare at him. "Here's what we're going to do. We are going to go out on a date and we're going to get you some inspiration."

He thinks for a moment. Indeed, he hasn't left the house recently, and a change of scenery could help him...

"Where are we going to go?"

Klee and Diona's giggles fill the air as they run ahead of the trio.

"Thank you for coming along with us, Kaeya, I appreciate you helping me get Albedo out of the house."

"It's my pleasure. Diona was happy when I asked if she wanted to come along, although, I must admit it's a bit shocking to think that Albedo would willingly agree to this."

The group had driven half an hour to the amusement park Albedo spent his summers growing up. It's a nostalgic place, and he's surprised Sucrose remembered it existed from the random memories he used to share with her.

"Why is it shocking?" He asks.

"Well, I just can't see you being one to enjoy rollercoasters."

Albedo pauses at this, laughing after he processes what Kaeya has said. "Do I seriously look like someone scared of rollercoasters? Whatever gave you that impression."

"You're more of a quiet kind of fun person, like bookstores and museums. A theme park is loud and bright, that's the opposite of everywhere I've seen you."

"Maybe our dear Kaeya is just projecting his fear of rollercoasters onto you," Sucrose taunts, with a face that could only be described as *trouble*.

"What? Definitely not, how could you even think that of me? After all, I am the brave Cavalry Captain, there is no danger too grand, no rollercoaster too big for m—!"

A high-pitched and loud voice cuts him off, "Kaaaaaeeyyyaaaaa!" The trio looks to find the source and sees Klee and Diona standing outside the entrance to a rollercoaster their hands clutched together. "Diona wants to ride this with you!"

Kaeya stands back, looking at the sheer size of the rollercoaster. His face twists with anxiety, and he calls back to the girls, "This one? Are you sure?"

"Yep!"

"Can't Albedo or Sucrose ride it with you?" He then turns to the two, voice desperate, "you'd want to go on it right?"

"Nah."

"Nope."

"Shit."

Klee calls again. "They're not tall enough to see the wait time anyways, we need you!"

"Nooooo," Kaeya says quietly while he fakes a smile, walking over to the girls and getting in line for the ride.

It's the second tallest at the park, but the fastest. Albedo remembers when it was first built, he was only around 7 years old and just barely tall enough to ride it. When he got off the ride, he promptly

puked and then swore to never get on it again. He feels a bit cruel to admit, but he's excited to see how his oh so *brave* Cavalry Captain fares on this ride.

"Bye Kaeya! Have fun!" Sucrose laughs, waving at him.

Only 20 minutes pass before Kaeya comes stumbling over to where the two have sat down, two energetic girls hanging on his arms and giggling. Kaeya, however, looks 3 seconds away from kneeling over.

"Are you okay?" Sucrose asks.

"Oh, perfectly fine. That rollercoaster was amazing and so fun."

"Really?" Klee exclaims, "but you were screaming the whole time, and we're even talking about how you thought you were going to die and saying things like 'I miss my mom!' and 'I hope you two know how much I love you!' and—"

Kaeya places his hand over her mouth, smiling as he says, "Klee, we really need to get your ears checked because that did. Not. Happen."

Diona snickers at him, "but you did—"

"Hey, do you want ice cream? I would love some ice cream right now, how about we go buy ice cream!"

Sucrose and Albedo can't help but laugh, standing the follow the girls and Kaeya to the shoppe.

After two hours filled with laughter and screaming (and a car ride filled with the snores of Klee, Diona, and Sucrose) Albedo finds himself in front of a blank sketchbook page. He finally picks up his pencil and gets to work, drawing out his idea for another two hours, before he is dragged to bed by a sleepy Kaeya and forced into the middle of him and Sucrose.

Chapter End Notes

Headcanons for this chapter:

- Sorry Crepus is a dilt and everyone wants to kiss him. This is my truth.

[Update 08/28/22]

- I think Albedo doesn't have the best confidence for all his abilities, since he just sees them as things he does rather than things that are a part of him. His art is something he needs to learn to love, and Kaeya and Sucrose are helping. I just want them all to make each other better.

- Vermeer is from that one liyue quest where you find him paintbrushes- the reason I chose him as the gallery owner is bc I have so good memories doing that quest lmao

- Kaeya is afraid of rollercoasters! The whole amusement park scene was actually suggested by my beta reader, and they also suggested he be scared of them lol. She's so smart guys ik <3

Come hang out with me on [Twitter](#)

Fingerfood

Chapter Notes

I've given up on a post schedule now you get random updates. Still on Sundays though but this one is special because it's Albedos birthday!! I speedy wrote 5 pages so I could post this today lmao. The only reason this chapter took so long is that I kept cringing over it and had to stop every 3 sentences. Anyways thanks to my beta reader it's actually also our friendaversary so now I'm obligated to tell you about them!! Her name is Kavi she's been playing genshin for longer than me and we met because she joined my world to bully me for not having Rosaria. She's a full 6 months older than me and I just learned today that her favorite color is gray. I love her a lot and am very grateful that she betas for me bc I'm too embarrassed to have anyone else do it. Enjoy the chapter!!

See the end of the chapter for more [notes](#)

It's funny how fast time can pass when you're surrounded by the people you love. In just the blink of an eye, the end of the month rolls around, and Albedo (who was too focused on the warmth of comforting arms around him and affirming, silky words to even notice his stress) sits on the rickety old stool he moved to his living room. He gazes at the skyline, looking at the lights of the buildings, clouds rolling in from the lake, and the sounds of cars down below. He just sits there and gazes and gazes and even thinks, only turning around at the sound of soft footsteps stopping at the entrance to the room.

"Mister Albedo," Sucrose asks tiredly, "why are you still awake? Your show is tomorrow."

"Sorry," he answers, "I'm just finally feeling the stress. I still think my paintings aren't good enough sometimes, and that I'll be the laughing stock of the gallery."

Sucrose walks up to him and wraps her arms around his shoulders, his hands coming to hold them as she does. They stay like that for a bit, no words said as Albedo relaxes into her touch.

"You are a very talented person. I don't know how many times you'll need to be told that before it sticks. You're smart, creative, beautiful, and kind. Sometimes I think you're not real, that you're too perfect to exist and I'll wake up one day and you'll be gone, just a figment of my imagination and only part of my dreamy paradise. But guess what? You're still here. I get to hold you like this, and we spend our days together with Kaeya and Klee, and I couldn't ask for anything else. When I look at what you create, I can see how much love you put into it, but it's like you can't even see it yourself. That makes me sad because I love you so much and you can't even love yourself and what you make. You deserve to be in that gallery, Albedo. You are smart, creative, beautiful, kind, talented, and loved. You are loved, you are loved, you are loved."

Albedo turns his head to look up at her. Sucrose's eyes are soft and crinkled by her smile, her hair messy from sleep, skin covered in goosebumps from the chill of the night. At this moment, her truth is all he knows. It's easy to feel loved around her when she does everything she can to always remind him of it. Ever since they first met she's been the constant pillar of support he's needed, someone he could share everything with. *She's the true work of art*, he thinks, turning around fully to press his lips to her own soft, luscious ones.

He slightly pulls away, lips barely brushing against hers while he whispers "I am loved," before pecking her lips once again, "I am loved," another kiss, "I am loved. I am loved. I am loved." Each one is followed by a kiss until he starts to cover her entire face with his lips. She giggles and gently cups his face, placing a hot yet soft kiss on him, and he melts into her, wrapping his arms around her waist, meeting every kiss.

When he pulls away, he whines out her name. "Sucrose. Sucroooooose." Albedo curls himself into her body, pressing his face into the warmth of her chest, feeling the beat of her heart. "Sucrose, I love you. I love you so much and I always have but I..." he chokes on his words, pausing and thinking of blue hair, blue eyes, tan skin, and a charming smile. He thinks of the endearing laugh and flustered faces. Oh god. *Oh god.*

"It's okay," she whispers, hand-carding through his hair. "We'll figure it out tomorrow. We have a big day ahead of us and it's almost three in the morning. Come on, let's go to sleep, love."

All he can do is follow her warmth as she pulls away, leading him to his room. They lay on the bed and curl into each other, breathing falling in sync. Albedo threads his fingers through her hair, playing with it in the way he knows she enjoys. His other hand holds hers, thumb brushing against skin.

"Remember when we watched that meteor shower together in high school?" He asks. "It was the middle of summer, we were on your roof laying next to each other, and you reached over to grab my hand, just like this," he raises their intertwined hands and presses a kiss onto hers, "and then you... looked at me with those big beautiful eyes of yours and I could see every single star reflected in them."

"I remember. I wouldn't forget."

"I should've kissed you then. There are so many things I've missed out on with you because I could never understand my feelings."

"Shut up. You didn't have those feelings back then, I know that."

"Oh."

"Did you not know that?"

"I guess not. You know how I am. I don't understand emotions and they're hard for me to recognize, but with you I know I always feel safe. You're...warm, comforting, everything I've ever needed. I'm sorry it took me so long to feel your love."

"Don't apologize. I've always known this about you. I'm obsessed with you, Albedo. Even just being friends is enough, although I would never say no to anything more."

"So are we...?"

"Don't we need to ask Kaeya first before deciding anything?"

Oh.

"So you realized?"

"I'm surprised you didn't. We're all so sickly in love with each other, I was just waiting for you guys to figure things out."

He chuckles. *Of course, she would. Ever so patient.*

"Even just laying with you like this makes me so incredibly happy, but at the same time, it feels like something's missing. *He's* missing."

"We'll see him tomorrow, and tell him too," she says.

"What if he doesn't accept?"

"Then we'll have to figure out how to get over him together, but I doubt that would be the case."

Her words of comfort soothe him, and Albedo finally relaxes. They fall asleep enveloped in the warmth they share, the smell of paint and old books filling the air.

Kaeya arrives at the gallery before Albedo does.

While Albedo's been stressing over getting his paintings finished, Kaeya and his father have been working behind the scenes to ensure the night is a success. The exhibit itself is going to be on display for 2 weeks, but the opening is truly the most important part of it. Many other gallery owners, critics, sponsors, and the more elite of people would be present. Some looking to buy any art they particularly like, others are just there to view, but a few want to recruit more artists to their gallery. This night could very much be the first of many for Albedo, after all, he has the talent and drives to have a promising art career if he chooses.

After the meeting with Mr. Vermeer, Crepus decided that the Dawn Winery would become a sponsor for the show, and thus provided catering for the evening at Kaeya's suggestion.

"I have to admit, I was tentative about allowing food in the gallery, but as long as it stays in the foyer we should be fine," Vermeer says.

Crepus smiles, "Oh don't be ridiculous, it's just finger food. Plus, you have to look at it from another perspective. Providing food for any patrons encourages them to stay longer, giving our artists a chance to speak with sponsors who may want to endorse them. A quick chat while eating could be their ticket to fame."

"Am I not famous enough?"

"Well, you're no Whitney, that's for sure. Ah, let's place the wine samples on the opposite side please," Crepus walks off to assist the catering company set up, leaving Vermeer standing with Kaeya.

"Oh, his nerve. He never changes, but I guess I should be grateful considering he helped me start this place up."

"Don't take it to heart, Vermeer. You know how my father can be. Besides, I think you're influential enough. You're giving many artists their big break after all."

"You're just saying that because I'm helping your boyfriend."

Kaeya freezes, his mind becoming a jumbled blank. He manages to sputter out, "b-b-boyfriend?!"

"Are you two not dating?"

"No! No, we're just friends."

Vermeer looks him up and down, "uh-huh. You need to change that."

"Stop it."

"Whatever. It's almost time for the opening anyways. We'll talk more later if given the chance."

The night flies by after that. A total blur to Albedo, who's been overwhelmed by the noise of the gallery littered with people. It's a great turnout, more than he expected, but his social battery died an hour ago and now all he wants is to be in the comfort of his home.

Currently, Albedo had escaped the madness of the foyer and stands in front of his displayed artwork. He stares at the meticulously made brush strokes that still came out a bit shaky, the stupidly expensive paint that's more thickly coated in certain areas, a stray smudge here and there.

Before, he would beat himself up about these mistakes and get into an art funk, never able to see the value of his pieces. However, now he can stare at these paintings and feel happy with them. *Proud* of them.

He yelps a bit when he's suddenly embraced from behind, quickly turning to see Sucrose giggling.

"Sorry for scaring you," she says, placing an apology kiss on his lips and straightening out the collar of his suit jacket.

"It's fine, I was just expecting to have more time to myself is all."

"You and me both. I guess our social batteries are depleted to the negatives, I just want some time alone."

Another voice pipes up, paired with the click of heels. "Why not be alone together, darlings? I can't believe you would have a secret meeting without me."

The two turn their heads to see Kaeya, the object of their infatuations, approach with a smile on his face.

"Hi again, Kaeya. Sorry for leaving, I lost you at the food table and got overwhelmed by the crowd. I found Albedo, though!"

"I can see that," he replies, turning to Albedo. "We were trying to talk with you all night, but you're quite popular it seems. So, how many other galleries are dying to sign you?"

Albedo blinks slowly before replying, "Were they supposed to try and sign me? None of the people I spoke to tonight brought it up, it was more of a formality. Although, I did have an interesting talk with the owner of the Ocean Pearl, turns out his sister is a biologist as well and he had many stories to share about her research on DNA involving mice as her subjects, really interesting stuff--"

"Hang on," Kaeya interrupts, placing a hand on his temple, "No one even mentioned it? Or tried? Are you sure?"

Albedo's face falls a bit. "Maybe they did. It could be possible they were trying and I didn't realize, you know how I am about social cues. Or maybe they just didn't want me at all..."

Sucrose cups his face. "Hey, don't be like that. Those scouts don't know what they're missing out on. I love you Albedo, how many times do I have to tell you how amazing you are before you start

believing it?"

He smiles at her, leaning into her hand. "Thanks, Rosie." Out of the corner of his eye, he sees a bit of movement and focuses again on Kaeya. He has a slight frown on his face, but it quickly vanishes and gets replaced with a look that's hard to describe. Bittersweet, hiding something.

"Let's step outside for a bit and get some fresh air," Kaeya suggests, touching their shoulders for a moment before he hurriedly walks to the nearby exit.

Left behind, Sucrose traces the figure walking away, muttering to Albedo, "Something's bothering him."

He hums in agreement. "Should we put off confessing?"

She shakes her head. "No. Let's do it now."

"Isn't that a bit too sudden?"

Ignoring his question, Sucrose grabs his hand and quickly leads them out the door Kaeya vanished from. When they get outside, they see him leaning over the concrete wall separating the sidewalk from the flower bushes growing under it. His hand quickly comes up to his face before turning to the duo.

"Despite everything, the night's gone well. Even if no other gallery is interested in you, you still have a guaranteed place here. The next show will come, and more scouts will too. Only a matter of time before you get out there. Luckily, Vermeer's taken a liking to your art. But, if you ask me he just wants to see me and my father happy since he thinks we're dating. Which, on the matter of, when did you two get together?"

"Kaeya—"

He laughs, "Sorry, I saw you two kiss earlier. I'm happy for both of you! Everyone was waiting to see when it would finally happen and *god* did it take forever. If you ever need someone to watch Klee when you have date nights, I'm always free."

"You have it all wrong!" Sucrose finally says.

"Huh? Wait, have you been dating this entire time and I just never realized? Did you get engaged?!"

"You're so ridiculous," she starts, "No, you're jumping to conclusions. Kaeya, I know you're in love with us. I've known for so long and I'm in love with you too, and... and I'm also in love with Albedo. Since the first day you came into the bookstore I thought to myself 'how could someone so easily charismatic and cool want to talk to me.' But then you stayed and chatted with me for 10 minutes about our favorite books, and you kept coming back after that. Every time you visited, my crush on you grew. You became a highlight of my day, and I used to tell myself to get over it because it wouldn't last. I never expected things to turn out as they did. I am so incredibly grateful that they did though because you are such an important part of me. You make me confident, you make me laugh more than anyone. You're caring and dedicated, you are so many things I don't even have the right of mind to convey. I'm in love with you, Kaeya."

"We both are," Albedo finally decides to chime in, eyes focused on the floor as he collects his thoughts. "I'm not good with feelings and it took me a long time to finally realize and for that I'm sorry—"

Kaeya cuts him off, "You don't have to apologize for that—"

"Let me finish." He takes a deep breath. "But believe me when I say I've always been drawn to you. The way you interact with children warmed my heart, and how interested you were towards me and Sucrose is so new for us. I've never had someone outside of my circle actually listen to me as you have. Whenever you look at me, it's like I'm the center of your universe. I feel warm around you, cherished. You make the most mundane things feel special. As long as I'm with you, I could do the dishes and write boring notes forever. I love you Kaeya," he finally looks up, "I— Kae?"

Tears trickle down Kaeya's face, his eye shiny and reflecting the moonlight. Despite this, he's smiling so widely that his lips tremble.

"Why are you crying?" Sucrose asks, panic in her voice. Maybe this wasn't the best time, maybe they should've waited; but Kaeya quickly eases their worries as he pulls Sucrose into him, burying his face into her shoulder. She feels his tears start to soak her skin as he mumbles against her.

"How dare you guys confess before me. I wanted to do it first. After all, I'm your knight. What a pathetic knight I am, crying in front of my Princess and Prince over something so silly." Kaeya blindly reaches for Albedo, grabbing onto his lapel and tugging until he gets the hint and wraps his arms around Kaeya's waist, leaning his head against his back.

His heart is pounding.

"We love you Kaeya," Albedo says.

"And I love you! I love you both so much I think I would suffocate and die trying to explain just how much."

"Please don't," Sucrose whispers, lifting his head and placing a kiss on his forehead, "We just got you, don't deprive us so soon."

"Oh my god," he whispers, standing straight and grasping her hands, "*Oh my god* please can you kiss me again? Properly this time?"

"That depends on what you mean by properly."

"Don't tease me."

She laughs, rocking onto her tip toes so she can kiss him as he wished, and he lets out something close to a groan, melting in their touch. Albedo reaches up and strokes Kaeya's hair, brushing it behind his ear as he places small kisses on Kaeya's neck. His whole body trembles at this, and he separates from Sucrose to turn around and smash his lips against Albedo's. The force was powerful enough to make Albedo have to lean back, Kaeya's hands wrapped around his waist to support him.

"I love you both so much," Kaeya says after finally separating, "I have never been happier than I am with you two. I love you, I love you, I love you."

The two just simply smile at him, Sucrose pulling him slightly down so they can kiss his cheeks.

Before they leave the gallery, Kaeya introduces them to his family. Crepus is ecstatic to meet them and his happy expression doesn't drop a bit. They have been told he could be a bit of a chatterbox, but as their conversation reaches the 10-minute mark, they finally understand that Kaeya was downplaying it.

Albedo finds it hard to keep focusing on Crepus animatedly talking about the gallery and all the artists present tonight. He appreciated the praise he was given, but after such a busy night, Albedo can't find it in himself to respond in kind. Sucrose and Kaeya's hands wrapped tightly around his are the only things keeping him grounded.

Sucrose, however, finds Crepus to be fun to talk with. He's able to keep her attention for longer than most people do. The only time she ignores him is when she notices Diluc staring at their joined hands, a sort of sour expression on his face. She winks at him, and he becomes flustered at being caught, coughing into his fist and turning away from her gaze.

After Kaeya forces his father to cut himself off so they can leave, the five of them exchange goodbyes. Albedo stops quickly to say his thanks to Vermeer, and after that, they finally leave.

Kaeya's heels click down the stairs from the door as he speaks, "The next exhibition isn't for a few months, but at least you have time to perfect some new pieces, right?"

"Yeah, but right now I don't even want to think about painting. I need a break so I ca—"

Albedo gets cut off by a frantic voice exclaiming from the door, "Sir, please, wait!" He turns to see a frenzied young woman calling after him, racing down the stairs to meet him. "Hello, please spare me a moment of your time. My name is Aratani, and I'm the event manager at the Yae Exhibition Hall, you might also know our company as the Yae Publishing House. You are Mr. Albedo Aurumson, yes?"

Albedo, stunned for a second, quickly nods his head, "Yes, that's me."

"Oh, how wonderful! I have been trying to speak with you all night but you are a very tricky fellow to find. Our chief editors Mr. Hirayama and Mrs. Yae herself saw your paintings and are very interested in your skills. They sent me to hand over our contact information in hopes that you would be interested in joining our staff. We can discuss details further in a meeting together, just simply send an email to us and we'll have it arranged. That is, if you're interested in the first place?"

Albedo's brain is a jumbled mess of mushed thoughts now. *The Yae Publishing House* wants him to join their staff? The same company that hired most of his favorite artists, published most of his favorite books and is run by one of the most influential people in their city. (Who is personally interested in him of all people?!)

He's dreaming, he must be. There's no way this is happening. But, as if reading his thoughts, Sucrose pinches his side and he finally responds, "Yes. Yes! Absolutely I'm interested."

"Great! Here are our business cards," she says, handing him three cards, "this one is for our publishing house, this one for our exhibition hall, and this is my personal information. Remember to email me and we can set up that meeting. Thank you so much for your time, Mr. Aurumson."

"Please, thank you, Ms. Aratani." He waves as she walks away, hand dropping soon as he stares at the business cards. Kaeya and Sucrose squeeze him from both sides, shaking him slightly in their excitement.

"I'm so proud of you!" Sucrose exclaims.

"The Yae Publishing House is as big as it gets in Teyvat. This is huge for you, Prince!"

Albedo doesn't even blink, mind still numb. "I have to be dreaming, right?"

"Not at all!"

"It's very real."

He can't even respond, so overwhelmed by the events of tonight. His first time showcasing his art, finally being able to tell his beloveds how he feels, and getting an employment offer from such a big and exclusive company? All in two hours?

All he wants to do now is sleep for 18 hours.

Thankfully the Archons have no other surprises planned for him, and he gets a wonderful night of sleep, smushed in between the soft, warm bodies of Kaeya and Sucrose.

Chapter End Notes

Headcanons for this chapter:

- Dw! Klee is hanging out with Jean and Lisa during this chapter, as Albedo felt she would be too bored at the gallery.
- Another date has been chosen between Albedo and his friends to go and see his paintings together, which is why no one else was at the opening.
- Secretly codes Albedo as something. Your job to figure it out.
- Whitey is in reference to the 5 minutes of art gallery wikipedia surfing I did. Crepus is so mean to his buddy Vermeer.
- Kaeya would still be supportive if Albedo and Sucrose decided to date each other. He wouldn't feel mad or led on, he would accept it and just get over his feelings without letting them know. Just a tiny bit of angst.
- Sucrose likes Crepus and finds him fun and I am so gonna build on that JUST YOU WAIT
- The Yae Publishing House is a cute lil cameo I included to promote the Eimiko agenda yes Miko and Ei are married here hehehehe
- Every named side character is an NPC from the game! Fun fact
- Warmth is a concept I include a lot throughout this story, I personally believe that being around people you love causes a warm and pleasant feeling :)

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Sunset reunion

Chapter Notes

Yoohoo!! I actually got this done in time for Kaeyas birthday. Happy birthday to my King kaeya and happy late birthday to my beloved sucrose!! Anyways being a junior is more hectic than you would expect so I've been swamped with school and speech team, so I cannot promise when another chapter will be out. I hope you enjoy this one though!! Xoxo

See the end of the chapter for more [notes](#)

"It's getting close to our autumn break, Albedo."

"So it is."

"You have any plans?"

"Not really. My moms won't be able to come home for another month or so. And Sucrose told me she wasn't planning on going to visit her family until after the new year."

"You should come visit the winery with me and my family!"

Kaeya had been discussing potentially bringing his lovers along to the winery, well, more like his father did. Every time they've called in the past week, Crepus had not so subtly hinted that he wanted them to come along. It's obvious to his sons that he just wants to seem impressive to the people important to his children, as if being the owner of the very famous Dawn Winery wasn't impressive enough. It's not the same after you've seen it in real life, he would reason.

It was a good idea though. They only have one week off at the end of November, might as well make it fun by going on a small trip. Plus, the week would include both Kaeya's and, more importantly, Sucrose's birthday. He wanted to make it special, especially since he didn't know when her birthday was until 2 weeks after her last one. To say he was embarrassed was an understatement.

"What's a winery?" Klee asks from her spot on the floor. She had been watching another documentary, this one about earthquakes, while the two men cuddled on the couch behind her.

Klee was absolutely ecstatic learning that her 3 favorite people finally started dating! After all, she had been working tirelessly playing matchmaker. Doesn't mean she was entirely happy though. She does get grossed out when she sees them do lovey-dovey things like hug and hold hands, and archons forbid if they kissed in front of her. She usually just makes a face and then ignores them. Which she had been doing up until this moment.

Albedo answers her question immediately, "a winery is where an alcoholic beverage known as wine is made. They usually grow grapes there, and they use the grapes and all these other things to make the wine."

"Woah, cool! Do they make anything other than wine?"

"Sometimes. It depends on the place. I'm sure Kaeya would love to give us a tour of his family's

winery."

Klee's eyes light up at the prospect, "Please can we see your winery, Kaeya?"

He laughs, "Of course, you can!"

"Yay!" She exclaims, "I'm going to go tell Sucrose!" And she runs off to the other's room, where she is currently deep asleep after working a closing shift.

"Klee, don't wake her up!"

Kaeya fondly rolls his eyes. *Kids*, he thinks.

The Dawn Winery is a two-hour drive from the city of freedom.

Diona, Klee, and Albedo have been deep asleep for both of those hours, Albedo hugging the pillow he brought along (specifically for his nap in the car) while Klee drools on his lap and Diona rests sat up rigidly.

Kaeya can't help but chuckle from his spot in the passenger seat. That chuckle quickly turns into a yelp as Sucrose hits a pothole full force and sends him jumping. He turns to her.

"Sucrose! What the hell!"

"Sorry, I'm sorry! I was trying to check the GPS and didn't see it coming. Who the *fuck* takes care of these roads?"

Kaeya looks back again only to see the Aurumson siblings and his goddaughter still fast asleep. He finally untenses and laughs.

"Archons. How can they sleep through that? My soul literally left my body."

"Albedo and Klee always pass out like this in the car. Sometimes they'll be driving for less than 20 minutes with me and it's lights out. At least their trip will be shorter."

"Do you want to switch again?" While Albedo ignores his driving duty by sleeping, Sucrose and Kaeya have been switching roles whenever they feel like it.

"Nah, we're only like 15 minutes from the winery. I'm excited! It's been so long since I've been out of the city."

"Have you ever been in this area?"

"Why would I? There's nothing out here," she laughs.

"Haha! True. But it's nice. I spent my summers out here as a kid. You can see thousands of stars in the sky. Barely any light pollution."

Sucrose hums.

"... Have you ever seen the stars?"

"Not really. Some nights I can make out the constellations, but never in their full glory."

"Then let's go stargazing on a nice night."

She hums again in agreement. "That would be nice."

A peaceful silence settles after that, Kaeya content to stare out the window at the setting sun illuminating the colors of falling leaves. It's always so beautiful driving down to the winery, and he's glad that he gets to share it with the people he cherishes. He's content to just stare outside the window for eternity...

That is until a small hand settles itself on his thigh.

He looks over at the culprit, face blank and focused on her task.

"Sucrose."

"Yeah?" She doesn't even spare a glance at him.

"Is your hand comfortable?"

"Very much so," she answers, smiling.

Kaeya scoffs, intertwining their fingers and removing her hand from his thigh, bringing it up to his lips to place a kiss on it. "I love you," he murmurs against her hand.

She quickly goes red, trying to pull away from his grip. But Kaeya doesn't let her, dropping their joined hands to his lap.

"I love you too," she finally says.

"Opa!" Diona exclaims as she runs out of the car, jumping into Crepus' outstretched arms. He staggers back a bit.

"Goodness me, Enkelin. You've grown so much since I last saw you! I don't know if my knees can handle this anymore." He laughs from deep within his belly, embracing the girl before setting her down. "Your onkle is inside with Ajax. Go say hi!"

Diona runs back to the car trunk to quickly grab her bag before running into the all too familiar winery. The building is glorious while bathed in the light of the setting sun, and Klee's eyes sparkle.

Crepus walks towards the car, giving Kaeya a hug before turning to the others just getting out of the car. "Hello again, Sucrose and Albedo! And this must be little Klee?"

Klee's face lights up at being recognized, "mhm!"

"My name's Crepus, I'm Kaeya's father and the owner of this wonderful building you see in front of you."

"You own the winery? That's so cool, Mister Crepus! Do you make the wine too? And can you also make juice?"

"Woah! You're quite knowledgeable, little one. Would you like a tour of our establishment?"

Klee's eyes shine as she looks back at Albedo, they plead for him to say yes. And of course, since he is so weak to her cuteness, he says yes. Klee cheers and starts to walk with Crepus towards the grapevines.

As he passes, Kaeya and his father make eye contact. Crepus winks at him. Kaeya internally groans after knowing what he's saying.

Enjoy the alone time together.

"Well," he starts, "shall we head inside?"

The maids of the winery greet them as soon as they walk into the foyer.

"Greetings, Master Kaeya. May we take your bags?" Moco asks, Hillie standing beside her.

"There's no need for that, really."

Adeline walks over to ruffle his hair. "Oh, Master Kaeya, please, allow us to spoil you this once." Adeline nods to Moco and Hillie, and the two walk off with the luggage. "It's not often I get to see my favorite baby brother."

Kaeya awkwardly smiles, "Addie, please."

"And don't think I'll just let you walk away! You haven't even introduced me to your friends."

"Sorry, I'm sorry! Adeline, meet my partners, Albedo and Sucrose."

The two shyly greet her, both of them not too keen on meeting new people.

Adeline pauses, processing.

And processing.

"You're dating people and didn't tell me?!" She finally says.

"Oh no."

"How dare you! I basically raised you, Yaya."

"But Linlin—"

"I don't want to hear it!" She places him in a mock chokehold, making him bend down so she can lightly jab his head, twisting her curled-up knuckles to ruffle his hair.

A new voice joins the chaos. "Oh, Adeline, stop. This is no way that an employee of Dawn Winery should be acting." Elzer chides, poking her in the ribs until she releases Kaeya with a yelp.

"Stop acting so high and mighty, Elzer! Crepus isn't here, so your sucking up does nothing."

"Uncouth."

"Kissass."

"Elzer! Hello!" Kaeya interrupts. "Meet my lovers, Sucrose, and Albedo."

He stops messing with Adeline.

And processes.

"You're dating people?!" He yells out, quickly correcting his mistake by clearing his throat.

"Ahem, my apologies. Welcome to the Dawn Winery. My name is Elzer, I help Master Crepus run this place. This here is Adelinde, our head maid. We are delighted to have you staying in our home." He respectfully bows, and Addie follows suit after he kicks her.

Sucrose and Albedo, who has been awkwardly standing and watching the scene in front of them find they don't know how to respond, and an uncomfortable silence follows. Sucrose finally bites the bullet in a panic. "Uh... The pleasure is all ours?"

She slaps her face afterward, embarrassed by her stupid reply. Adelinde and Elzer laugh.

"We must be getting back to dinner preparations. Please, enjoy your stay at the Dawn Winery to your fullest. Don't hesitate to ask us for anything you may require. And you, Kaeya!" Elzer points an accusing finger at him. "Make sure to be a good host."

Kaeya awkwardly rubs his neck, "Okay, okay. You don't need to tell me twice. See ya."

The two take their leave and Kaeya lets out a sigh of relief. "Sorry about those two. They've been employed here since before I was born, so they're basically older siblings to me."

Albedo chuckles, "I think it's cute. They treat you like I treat Klee. You really are the baby of the family."

"Hey! How rude. That isn't true at all, I am a grown man and they treat me as such."

A sudden hand places itself on Kaeya's head, ruffling his hair. "Oh, yeah, totally," Diluc says, "Such a grown man-baby. Admit it, you still get spoiled by Adelinde."

"You're just jealous she loves me more."

Diluc means a deadpan expression, rolling his eyes. "Oh, I am just seething with jealousy. Anyways, Diona wanted to watch a movie if you three want to join us."

"We would love to." Sucrose chirps, much to Kaeya's dismay. His father gets him quality alone time with his lovers, and one of them decides to watch a movie with his brother and goddaughter! Honestly, how rude, and so unromantic.

The three make their way to the den area, finding Childe and Diona on the floor going through old and worn-out piles of VHS tapes. And very loudly arguing with each other over which movie to watch.

"I'm telling you, Diona. The Boar Princess is the way to go!"

"No! My dad read the books to me when I was younger, and if the movie is as scary as those then I don't want to watch it!"

"What? It wasn't scary. You're just a big ole baby." Diona blows a raspberry at him, so he blows one back.

"Ajax, stop acting like a child." Diluc chides, and Albedo lets out a little *ohh* sound, probably because he just realized where the nickname Childe comes from.

"Jeez, we still have all our old VHS tapes?" Kaeya asks.

"Your entire collection!" Childe chimes in. "We haven't settled on one to watch. Miss Diona is picky."

"I'm not watching a horror movie!"

"It's not scary!"

Sucrose's eyes span over the many titles laid on the floor, her eyes lighting up at one in particular. "How about Flowers for Princess Fischl? That was my favorite as a kid."

Childe and Diona nod, finally agreeing on a movie to watch. While he struggles to put the VHS tape into the player, the rest of them get settled on the couch.

Diona nestles into Kaeya's side, and he wraps a blanket around them. Albedo takes the spot on his other side, smirking at Sucrose. She just winks at him before plopping between his legs, using his thigh as a pillow. Albedo grunts, but doesn't express any discomfort.

"What kind of psychopath doesn't rewind the tape after they're done watching it?" Childe asks, looking back to see the guilty face of Diluc as he burrows into the pillows of the couch. "Babe..."

"I'm sorry for the transgressions of my 7-year-old self."

"I don't know if we can keep dating after this. You're a totally different person."

Diluc laughs, shaking his head fondly. For some reason, Childe flushes at this. He quickly presses play, turns off the lights, and takes his place next to his lovely boyfriend.

Crepus and Klee come back 15 minutes later from their trip around the winery, and despite only just meeting Crepus, Klee had no problem with falling asleep against his back while he had to carry her back to the house.

"She told me she was too tired to walk back, so I offered to give her a piggyback ride. Not even 5 minutes later she's asleep against my shoulder!" Crepus laughs, quickly grimacing after remembering that the small girl is still asleep against his back. He goes back to a whispering tone, "Anyways, I thought Diona and Klee could sleep in the boys' old bedroom, so I'll go put her to lay down there."

"Don't break your back going up those stairs, dad," Diluc calls out.

"How old do you think I am, boy? I got this! Now, don't you youngin's stay up too late, I'm putting you to work tomorrow." The brothers groan in unison. "Bah, do you think I let you stay here for free? No!"

"Dibs on labeling!"

"Fuck you, Kaeya!" Diluc snaps at him.

So childish, Sucrose and Albedo think fondly, small smiles on their faces.

After the movie finishes, Diluc and Childe excuse themselves to their room, exhausted after their day of travel.

Kaeya and Albedo are left by themselves, now having to deal with the sleeping forms of Diona and Sucrose.

Despite being the most excited to watch the movie, they both ended up falling asleep before the climax.

"I can carry Sucrose up," Albedo says.

Kaeya quizzically looks him up and down.

"What?"

"Are you sure? I can easily carry Sucrose. You can take Diona to her room."

"Are you implying I'm weak?"

"No, my love, I would never—"

"I'm gonna carry her so hard just to prove you wrong."

"No, wait!"

Sucrose is confused the next morning when she wakes up in an unfamiliar bed. She's even more confused about why Kaeya keeps stealing almost intimidated glances at Albedo.

Chapter End Notes

Headcanons:

- You can pry the dawn winery family headcanon from my cold, dead hands.
- Sorry I just love big sis linlin with her baby yaya. I LOVE THEM
- Albedo will always answer any question klee may have honesty! Her teachers think he's to thank for her smarts at such a young age
- Crepus: Son, I gave you the chance and you blew it.
- Kaeya: I'm sorry but she wanted to w-
- Crepus: I almost lost my entire vineyard to a fire bc of that kid and you guys didn't even have a lil make out session?! Get it together! My sacrifices cannot be in vain
- Kaeya: Stop! talking!
- Crepus old white dad fr
- Chiluc back!! They have some special scenes coming up so I hope you all love them as much as I do
- Albedo looking like a sickly victorian man but then being strong as hell >>>

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End Notes

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